

**CHINA AND THE PROPOSED SECOND
AFRO-ASIAN CONFERENCE**

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**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Philosophy of the Jawaharlal Nehru University
School of International Studies**

NEW DELHI

1975

PREFACE

The concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity has been in many ways central to China's foreign policy but the meaning of the concept has undergone a change. This dissertation is an attempt to delineate this change. It examines the Chinese attitude to the proposed Second Afro-Asian Conference and records the successes and failures of Chinese diplomacy in convening and postponing the conference.

I am extremely thankful to Dr. G. P. Deshpande, Assistant Professor, Chinese Studies Division, School of International Studies, for his guidance. His suggestions and comments have helped me a great deal in bringing this dissertation to its present form.

I am thankful to the staff of the library of Indian Council of World Affairs.

28 February 1975

New Delhi 57

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Chapter I

THE CONCEPT OF AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY AND CHINA'S WORLD VIEW

Chapter I

THE CONCEPT OF AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY AND CHINA'S WORLD VIEW

I

Marx had predicted that the capitalism in Europe will collapse as a result of intensification of the contradictions inbuilt in that system. That did not happen. Lenin explained that capitalism did not collapse because it found its way out of contradictions by expanding into colonial and semi-colonial countries. Like Marx, Lenin believed in the inevitability of the collapse of capitalism and that was why he defined imperialism as "capitalism in transition or more precisely as moribund capitalism."¹

after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia communists started speculating as to where the next revolution would occur. The eyes of most of the communists were fixed on West Europe and Asia and Africa were considered incapable of making a revolution. A few of them, however, were conscious of the importance of Asia and Africa. Stalin wrote in November 1918 that:

At a time when the revolutionary movement is rising in Europe...the eyes of all are naturally turned to the West. It is there ...that the chains of imperialism...which are strangling the whole world, must first of all be smashed... At such a moment one "involuntarily" tends to lose sight of, to forget the far off East....

1 V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism", Selected Works (London, 1944), vol. 5, p. 117.

Yet the East should not be forgotten for a single moment, if only because it represents the "inexhaustible" reserve and "most reliable" rear of imperialism. 2

He urged that it was the:

task of the communists to break the age-long sleep of the oppressed peoples of the East, to infect the workers and peasants of these countries with the emancipatory spirit of revolution to rouse them to fight imperialism and thus deprive world imperialism of its "most reliable" rear and "inexhaustible" reserve.

Without this, the definite triumph of socialism, complete victory over imperialism, is unthinkable. 3

Most of the communists, however, found it difficult to shed their Euro-centric view of world revolution. The manifesto of the First Congress of the Comintern, drafted by Trotsky, declared that the workers and peasants "not only of Annam, Algiers and Bengal, but also of Persia and Armenia will gain their opportunity of independent existence only when the workers of England and France have overthrown Lloyd George and Clemenceau and taken state power into their own hands." 4

Lenin, expressing his views on the importance of Afro-Asia in world revolution, in his report to the Second All Russian Congress of Communist organizations of the Eastern Peoples

2 J. V. Stalin, "Don't Forget the East", 24 November editorial of Zhizn Natsionalnosti. Text in Works (Moscow, 1953), vol. 4, p. 174.

3 Ibid., p. 175.

4 Jane Degras, The Communist International 1919-1943: Documents (London, 1971), p. 43. Emphasis added.

held in November-December 1919 said, that "it goes without saying that only the proletariat of all the world's advanced countries can win final victory... But they cannot triumph without the help of the toiling masses of all the oppressed colonial peoples, especially those of the East."⁵

It was at this congress that the Eastern perspective of world revolution was put forward by a Turkish communist Sultan Galiev who argued that "the East is capable of putting a revolutionary torch to all of Western Europe."⁶ With a view to putting an end to the controversy over the relative importance of the East and the West, the congress passed a compromise resolution proclaiming that "the national liberation movement in the East and the social revolution (Going on in the West) are presently pursuing the same goal, namely, that of throwing off the capitalist imperialists."⁷

The controversy did not end with passing of the compromise resolution. During his discussions with Lenin in the Committee of the Second Congress of the Comintern, which was entrusted with the task of drafting the theses on national and

5 quoted in Branko Lazitch and Milorad M. Drachkovitch Lenin and Comintern (California, 1972), vol. 1, p. 379.

6 Ibid. Sultan Galiev was also the Assistant Commissar for Nationalities under Stalin. For his views see Helene Carrere d'Encausse and Stuart R. Schram, ed., "Marxism and Asia" (London, 1969), pp. 35-37, 178-80.

7 Ibid.

colonial questions, M.N. Roy argued that

the revolution in Europe depends utterly on the course of revolution in the East. Unless revolution triumphs in the Eastern countries, the communist movement in the West may fall apart. World capitalism draws its main resources and income from the colonies, primarily from Asia.... It is therefore essential to fuel the revolutionary movement in the East, and adopt as a fundamental thesis that, the fate of world communism depends on the victory of communism in the East. 8

Lenin firmly resisted this viewpoint and criticized M.N. Roy for "going too far". Within a year, however, in his report on Russian Communist Party Tactics to the Third World Congress, without "going as far" as M.N. Roy, Lenin admitted that the national liberation movement of Asia and Africa "may play a much larger role in the coming decisive battles of the world revolution against capitalism and imperialism than we all had expected."⁹

The question of unity of the communists and Afro-Asia was discussed in detail in the Second Congress of the Comintern. In fact, this was the most hotly debated subject. In his draft theses on national and colonial questions submitted to the Congress, Lenin had argued that the real equality of nations was impossible without the abolition of imperialism. Having emphasized the distinction between oppressor nations and

8 Ibid., p. 388.

9 Ibid., p. 545.

oppressed nations, he added that the duty of the communists was not to confine to a bare recognition or proclamation of the need for closer union between the working people of the nations, but to pursue a policy "that will achieve the closest alliance with Soviet Russia, of all national and colonial liberation movements".¹⁰ Since it would have been 'utopian' to believe that proletarian parties in these countries could pursue communist tactics and a communist policy "without establishing definite relations with the peasant movements and without giving it effective support",¹¹ Lenin asked the Comintern and the communists in Afro-Asian countries to support and align themselves with the national liberation movements led by national bourgeoisie. Elaborating this line, Zinoviev, in his closing speech to Baku Congress on 7 September 1920, said: "We, the disciples of Karl Marx, continuers of his work, have the opportunity to develop this ("proletariat of the world unite") formula, to amplify it, broaden it and say, 'Proletarians of all countries and oppressed peoples of the entire world unite'".¹² Admitting that this slogan did not entirely

10 V. I. Lenin, "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and Colonial questions", Text in Collected Works (Moscow, 1966), vol. 31, p. 146.

11 "Report of the Commission on the National and the Colonial questions", Text in ibid., pp. 241-42.

12 Quoted in Lazitch and Drachkovitch, n. 5, p. 406. Emphasis original.

stick to the letter of the Communist Manifesto, Lenin asserted that "in the changed context this new slogan is the right one".¹³ The fourth congress of the Comintern, the last attended by Lenin, adopted the 'Theses on the Eastern question' and decided to emphasize the slogan of "the anti-imperialist united front"¹⁴ in the East.

The line of Second Comintern Congress and Baku Congress was followed till the end of 1928. From 1929 onwards the concept of alliance with Afro-Asian nationalist movements was abandoned for all practical purposes, though not in words. The national bourgeoisie in all Afro-Asian countries was indiscriminately charged by Stalin of having betrayed the national liberation movements. He dubbed the Afro-Asian national bourgeoisie as "reformist", who first compromised and eventually capitulated to imperialism. As Stalin understood it, by the end of 1928, though not all national bourgeoisie movements had passed over to the camp of counter-revolution, he had no doubt that "they will do this later on."¹⁵ 'Sun Yat-senism', Gandhism and Sarekat Islam (the first nationalist organization in Indonesia) were condemned as "dangerous" and it was declared by Stalin that "the formation of any kind of bloc between

13 Quoted in ibid., p. 545.

14 Text of the theses in Degras, n. 4, p. 390.

15 "Theses on the Revolutionary Movement in Colonial and Semicolonial countries Adopted by the Sixth Congress of the Comintern." Extracts in ibid., vol. 2, p. 541.

communist party and the national reformist opposition must be rejected."¹⁶ The communists were asked to struggle against the nationalist movements led by national bourgeoisie and to expose them in order to shake the faith of the masses in them. This attitude to national liberation movements did not change for the next twenty five years. Stalin, contrary to his 1918 appeal, had forgotten the East.

The post 1945 period witnessed the steady decline of European colonialism and the emergence of the US as the strongest capitalist power. Still more important was the fact that with or without communist support, national independence was achieved in several Afro-Asian countries by the class which was condemned by Stalin as capitulationist. Stubbornly refusing to see things either as black or white major countries took the course of non-alignment. Unlike in the days of Lenin, national bourgeoisie was actually in power in Asia and Africa and the important question for the communists now was how to accommodate them in the 'united front against imperialism.'

For Stalin, this question did not exist. He turned a blind eye to all these developments. He continued to view the independent nations with suspicion. The independence of Afro-Asian countries was described as fake and fictitious.

16 Ibid. emphasis added.

The acceptance of the Mountbatten Plan by India was viewed as "capitulation to British imperialism."¹⁷ In foreign policy, it was said that India was "being more and more drawn into the orbit of Anglo-American bloc"¹⁸ and allegedly, it was to India that the premier role had been assigned - "the role of Anglo-American agent in Southeast Asia."¹⁹

II

The concept of struggle against imperialism is important in China's foreign policy because it claims that its foreign policy is based on Marxism-Leninism. Further, the Chinese experience of colonial exploitation for more than a century has made them anti-imperialist. In fact Chinese turned to Marxism-Leninism only when, in the words of Mao, "imperialist aggression shattered the fond dreams of learning from the West."²⁰ Naturally, on 30 June 1949, Mao said that China would ally itself "with the Soviet Union, with the Peoples Democracies and with the proletariat and the broad masses of the people in all other countries, and form an international united front"²¹ against imperialism.

17 New Times (Moscow), no. 3, 14 January 1948.

18 Ibid., 12 January 1949.

19 Ibid., no. 22, 25 May 1949.

20 Mao Tse-tung, "On the Peoples Democratic Dictatorship". Text in Selected Writings (Calcutta, 1967), p. 99.

21 Ibid., p. 101.

Given Stalin's approach to Afro-Asia described above and his unquestionable authority over the communist movement, it must have been difficult for Mao to adopt a different approach to Afro-Asia during Stalin's lifetime. This could be one reason why Mao said that the Chinese "must lean on one side." "Sitting on fence will not do, nor is there a third road. We oppose Chiang Kai-shek reactionaries who lean to the side of imperialism, and we also oppose the illusions about a third road."²² In 1950, Asia was described by the Chinese as consisting of "three different Asias." First category was the Soviet Asia. Second category consisted of the peoples' democracies of China, Mongolia, North Korea and North Vietnam. Third Asia consisted of "such colonial or dependent countries as India, Indonesia, Burma, Iran, Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Malaya and Siam."²³

Within a year, however, China was compelled to involve itself in a war which was not of its own making, namely, the Korean War. The war taught China some important lessons. One was that leaning on one side was a rather risky business. The Indian role in bringing about the settlement convinced the Chinese that the non-aligned, in fact, enjoyed independent political standing in international politics. This experience

22 Ibid., p. 102.

23 People's China (Peking), vol. 1, no. 1, 1 January 1950, p. 24. Emphasis added.

paved way to the transformation in China's view of Afro-Asian affairs.

The first steps were taken immediately after the death of Stalin in March 1953. V. K. Krishna Menon tells us that China gave him a "great deal of encouragement to go on"²⁴ with his proposals on the question of Korean war prisoners even before the Soviet Union accepted them. After Stalin's death, Chou En-lai put forward a peace plan which, as pointed out by A. S. Karol, was very much similar to the Indian one which was earlier rejected by China again and again.²⁵ Molotov in his conversations with Anthony Eden as early as in 1954 admitted, that "China was very much her own master, in these (foreign policy) matters."²⁶

Speaking in Geneva on 28 April 1954 Chou En-lai emphasized the common experience of Asia which had suffered imperialist oppression and enslavement and described Asian struggle for liberation from foreign imperialist oppression, for national independence and freedom as a "just struggle."²⁷ Chinese determination in treading a new path was shown in Chou En-lai's visit after Geneva Conference, to India and Burma—the

24 Michael Brecher, India and World Politics: Krishna Menon's View of the World (London, 1968), p. 12.

25 A. S. Karol, China: The Other Communism (London, 1967), p. 369.

26 Anthony Eden, Full Circle (London, 1960), p. 121.

27 Supplement to People's China, no. 10, 16 May 1954, p. 4.

proponents of the "third road" in international relations.

China turned its attention to Africa in the second half of 1954. In his report to the First National People's Congress on 23 September, Chou En-lai revealed that contacts were being made with a view to establish "normal relations between China and Afghanistan as well as China and Israel,"²⁸ and also expressed hopes to promote "business relations with Middle and Near Eastern and African countries as to improve mutual contacts and understanding and create favourable conditions for the establishment of normal relations."²⁹ The "Observer" writing in People's China condemned the US policy of organizing military blocs and noted that the US had, besides SEATO, "other irons in the fire"³⁰ in the Middle East. Neither Chou En-lai nor the "Observer" thought of Africa as an ally at this time. They looked only to Asia, the determination of Asian people and Nehru's collective peace as "the only alternative to war preparedness and the only substantial approach to real security".³¹ Solidarity against imperialism was at that time very much an Asian solidarity.

Only after the communique of Bogor Conference in Indonesia was issued on 29 December 1954 that China grasped the

28 The text in ibid., no. 20, 16 October 1954, p. 23.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., p. 33.

31 Ibid.

importance of Africa. It was only then that China discovered that there was a common ground not only between China and the countries of Asia but also between China and the countries of Africa. Welcoming the Bogor proposal for Afro-Asian conference People's Daily said that:

most of the areas of Asia and Africa have long been subjected to oppression and enslavement by colonialism and the great majority of the Asian and African peoples have suffered the scourge or threats of war by the imperialist aggressors. our voices have been ignored for a long time and our aspirations and demands mocked or suppressed by others. 32

According to People's Daily, a radical change had already occurred over Asia and the "dawn" was rising over the so-called dark continent of Africa. ³³ People's Daily also appreciated the Colombo powers' support to Indonesia on the question of West Irian and the support to Tunisian and Moroccan struggle for Independence. Chou En-lai's report to the National People's Congress mentioned above had said, that "business relations" with the Middle East, Near Eastern and African countries were to be promoted with a view to establish "normal relations." Now it was said, that the business contacts, cultural exchange and visits of people were of "vital significance to the fight of the Asian and African countries for national independence and expansion of the area of peace as well as for

32 SCMP, no. 962, p. 3. Emphasis added.

33 Ibid.

promoting mutual understanding and economic development among the peoples of this region."³⁴ These contacts were already being made with Asian countries and China showed its willingness to "continue and expand these beneficial work (sic) with countries in the Asian-African region..."³⁵ China observed 21 February 1955 as the "International Day of Struggle against Colonialism" and proclaimed the support to the national liberation movement which was "in full flow".³⁶ It was with this view that China participated in the Bandung Conference.

III

The Sino-Soviet differences were and are, to an extent, related to "the correct" attitude to be taken by the communist states towards the national liberation wars in Asia and Africa. Each party argued its own viewpoint in a hope to convert the other and bring it back to "the correct" path. The efforts to convince each other were given up in 1963. A brief survey of these differences is desirable.

The differences started with the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU held in 1956. It was argued by the Soviets that in the nuclear age "there are only two ways; either peaceful co-existence or the most destructive war in human history. There is no third way."³⁷ In China's view, there were no less than

34 Ibid., p. 4. Emphasis added.

35 Ibid.

36 People's China, no. 6, 11 March 1956.

37 Khrushchov's Main "Political Report to the Twentieth

three ways - three courses of action. One, the communist states can and should coexist with the capitalist states. Two, the people in the imperialist and colonial semi-colonial countries should take the road of revolution to overthrow the class and national enemies respectively. Three, the communist states should help the people in colonial and semi-colonial countries in their fight against imperialism. That is, the communist states must unite with third world countries against imperialism. China argued that:

Peaceful coexistence and people's revolutions in various countries are in themselves two different things, not one and the same thing; two different concepts, not one; two different kinds of question and not one and the same kind of question.

Peaceful coexistence refers to relations between nations; revolution means overthrow of the oppressors as a class by the oppressed peoples within each country. While in the case of colonial and semi-colonial countries it is first and foremost a question of overthrowing alien oppressors, namely, the imperialists. 38

Promoting peaceful coexistence does not mean promoting coexistence of various classes in the capitalist countries nor does it mean the coexistence of colonial semi-colonial peoples and

Congress of the CPSU". The Text in David Floyd, Maq Against Khrushchey: A Short History of Sino-Soviet Conflict (London, 1964), p. 228.

38 "Long Live Leninism". The article published in "Red Flag" in February 1960 to mark the ninetieth anniversary of Lenin's birth. The text in ibid., p. 269. Emphasis added.

the imperialism. The task of the revolutionaries in colonial and semi-colonial countries is to fight imperialism and liberate their nations. The communist states must help them in this struggle. Such help in China's view, is not contrary to the principles of peaceful coexistence.

All Marxist-Leninists used to argue, at least till 1956, that war was inevitable as long as imperialism existed. Khrushchov maintained that this proposition was evolved at a time when (1) imperialism was an all embracing world system, and (ii) the social and political forces that did not want war were weak, poorly organized and hence, unable to compel the imperialists to renounce war. He argued in 1956 that:

In that period this precept was absolutely correct. At the present time however the situation has changed radically.... In these circumstances certainly the Leninist precept that as long as imperialism exists, the economic base giving rise to wars will also be preserved, remains in force... But war is not fatalistically inevitable.... 39

He went a step forward and asserted that the countries, imperialist and the communist, could and should do more than mere coexisting. It was "necessary to proceed further, to improve relations, strengthen confidence between countries and cooperate".⁴⁰

39 Khrushchov's Main Political Report to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, n. 37, p. 229. Emphasis added.

40 Ibid., p. 228. Emphasis added.

In 1956, apart from laying down that the communist parties should take a peaceful road to power, Khrushchov did not say anything about the fate of the world revolution. Observing silence on the question of national liberation, he spoke about and stressed the possibility of preventing war without specifying the kind of war he had in mind. After the "Camp David Talks" his position became very clear. In his banquet speech in Peking on 30 September 1959, he told his Chinese hosts that:

...the leaders of the governments in some capitalist countries have begun to show a certain tendency towards a realistic understanding of the situation that has emerged in the world.

When I spoke with President of the U.S.A. ... I got the impression that the President of the U.S.A. - and not a few people support him - understands the need to relax international tension.

...Therefore we on our part must do all we can to exclude war as a means of settling disputed questions and settle these questions by negotiations....

But we must think realistically and understand the contemporary situation correctly. This of course does not by any means signify that we are so strong then we must test by force the stability of capitalist system. This would be wrong. 41

Khrushchov not only asked the Chinese to abandon use of force to liberate Taiwan but also added that, "if the people do not want it, even such a noble and progressive system as socialism

41 The text of the speech in ibid., pp. 262-63. Emphasis added.

cannot be imposed by force of arms.⁴² In other words, priority was to be given to Soviet-US detente, to avoiding war, over all other issues such as national liberation in Afro-Asia and the class struggle in the capitalist countries. The resolution unanimously adopted in the meeting of Warsaw Pact countries, where the Chinese delegate was present as an observer and refused to sign the document on 4 February 1960, categorically stated that "in our times states do not and cannot have any greater or nobler task than that of contributing to the establishment of lasting peace on the earth."⁴³ The communist parties were asked to avoid war, "...including a⁴⁴ local war, because a local war might grow into a world war".

China, on the other hand, asserted absolute correctness of Lenin's thinking: that war was inevitable outcome of the capitalism; imperialism was the last stage of capitalism; as long as capitalism existed the wars would occur as wars were a continuation of politics, and all politics were class politics. According to Chinese classification of wars, wars may be:

...wars among the imperialists for redevision of the world or war of aggression and anti-aggression between the imperialists and the oppressed nations, or civil

42 Ibid., p. 263. Emphasis added.

43 Ibid., p. 264. Emphasis added.

44 Khrushchov's address to the Third Congress of the Rumanian Communist Party on 21 June 1960. Text in ibid., p. 278. Emphasis added.

wars of revolution and counterrevolution between the exploited and the exploiting classes in the imperialist countries; or of course wars in which the imperialists attack the socialist countries and socialist countries are forced to defend themselves. 45

China regards the wars among the imperialists, the imperialist wars to suppress the people at home and the colonies as "unjust" wars and the wars waged by oppressed peoples in the imperialist countries and in colonies against imperialism as "just" wars. It says, supporting anti-imperialist wars of colonial and semi-colonial people is the duty of Communist states.

The question whether war can be avoided, in China's view, is relevant only to world war the source of which is imperialism. It is possible to avert such a war but as long as imperialism exists the danger of war remains. It is wrong to believe that all wars can be avoided when imperialism exists. Such an illusion might lead to disastrous consequences. Since it is the imperialists who decide whether to unleash war or not, all that the 'peace forces' can and should do is to be prepared for war and fight it out when and if the imperialists start it.

The genuine and lasting peace can be realized only when imperialism has been extinguished. China stresses that imperialism will not crumble of itself but it will, when the blows

are dealt by the "just" wars. The "just" wars are thus the only instrument of winning a lasting peace. Supporting these wars, therefore, is the noblest task and not avoiding them.

But the just wars are not to be started at any time, any place. It is necessary to deal seriously with imperialism and reactionaries. "One should despise them strategically and take full account of them tactically."⁴⁶ In other words, the revolutionaries must work with the belief that final victory is theirs and history is on their side. But each battle must be carefully planned and offensives well timed to avoid setbacks and ensure victory.

China describes imperialism as "a paper tiger". Khrushchov retorted that the paper tiger has a nuclear teeth. China reiterated its position that even with its "nuclear teeth" imperialism remains a paper tiger. Revolutionaries need not be afraid of nuclear weapons. They should refuse to be blackmailed because imperialists cannot use those weapons. China substantiates its view by citing the cases of Chinese, Vietnamese and Algerian revolutions which were won in spite of the opposition of nuclear powers. It concludes that:

No matter what kind of teeth imperialism
may have whether guns, tanks, rocket teeth
or any other kind of teeth that modern

46 "Workers of All Countries Unite, Oppose Our Common Enemy", People's Daily Editorial of 15 December 1962. Text in Floyd, n. 37, p. 334.

science and technology may provide...
 In the final analysis neither nuclear
 teeth nor any other kind of teeth can
 save imperialism from its fate of in-
 evitable extinction. 47

In the eyes of the Soviet Union, the peaceful transi-
 tion to socialism is only one of the tools to make peaceful co-
 existence and lasting peace possible. But that is not the most
 important tool. The fate of the world peace depends not much
 upon the peace forces and peaceful transition but on the acti-
 vities of super powers. Because, in the words of Khrushchov,
 "history itself has assigned them such a place. On our two
countries depends to a large extent how the international
 situation will develop in the future, along the road of streng-
 48
 thening peace or along the road of straining relations".
 China stubbornly refuses to accept as correct this super power
 centric view of fate of the world. In its view the revolu-
 tionaries and "just" wars are the real winners and guardians
 of peace. The right way to realize peace is, therefore, to
 help "just" wars.

The questions arise: what will China do in the cause of
 'just' wars? Will the PLA go on the mission of helping the
 revolutionaries? If yes, when and why? How far in its view,

47 "The Differences between Comrade Togliatti and Us."
People's Daily Editorial of 31 December 1962, Extracts
 in ibid., p. 342.

48 Khrushchov's Address to the Third Congress of the
Rumanian Communist Party, n. 44, p. 279. Emphasis added.

will the development of socialism in other countries depend on the armed intervention by the Communist powers?

These questions are raised most often and the Chinese answers to these, the least understood. There are not a few who believe that Mao has a plan of the conquest first of Southeast Asia and eventually of Asia as a whole. Dr. A. M. Halpern once told the US House of Representatives Committee on foreign affairs that, "such a plan of operation exists at some level"⁴⁹ though he was not sure at what level it existed. Such a conquest however, is not regarded by China as its business. Its position is more than clear:

When the socialist country in the face of imperialist aggression is compelled to launch counter attacks in a defensive war and goes beyond its own border to pursue and eliminate its enemies from abroad...is this justified? Certainly it is justified.... In accordance with the strict principles of communists such an operation must be strictly limited to the time when the imperialists launch a war of aggression against them. Socialist countries never permit themselves to send, never should and never will send their troops across their border unless they are subjected to aggression from foreign enemy. Since the armed forces of socialist countries fight for justice, when these forces have to go beyond their borders... it is only natural that they should exert an influence and have an effect wherever they go, but even then the emergence of peoples revolution and the establishment of

49 Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Sino-Soviet Conflict: Report on Sino-Soviet Conflict and Its Implications (Washington, 1965), p. 156.

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the socialist system in those states... will still depend on the will of the masses of the people there. 50

The intervention of the PLA is thus ruled out. What about the 'aid' and 'support' to revolutionaries, in kinds other than military intervention? Lin Piao wrote in September 1965:

The people of the world invariably support each other in the struggle against imperialism and its lackeys. Those who have won victories are duty bound to support and aid the people who have not yet done so. Nevertheless, foreign aid can play only a supplementary role. 51

Moderate material and military aid as well as political support is not ruled out. At the same time it is categorically stated that if revolutionaries relied excessively on aid from outside, revolution cannot "be won or be consolidated even if it is won".⁵² It is worth noting that aid is promised only to the anti-imperialist struggles.

IV

Having identified the national liberation wars as the wars for the downfall of imperialism and consequently for lasting and genuine peace, China looks to these wars as one of the important forces in the world revolution and to the

50 Long Live Leninism, n. 38, pp. 269-70. Emphasis added.

51 "Long Live the Victory of the People's War" written in Commemoration of the Twentieth Anniversary of Victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japan. The text in A. Doak Barnett, China After Mao (Princeton, 1967), p. 235. Emphasis added.

52 Ibid., p. 236.

third world as the main theatre of the decisive battles. Since:

...the various types of contradictions in the contemporary world are concentrated in the vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America....

...the whole cause of international proletarian revolution hinges on the outcome of the revolutionary struggles of the people of these areas.... 53

The importance that China attaches to this area was again made clear by Lin Piao, when he wrote in 1965 that:

Taking the entire globe if North America and Western Europe can be called the cities of the world then Asia, Africa and Latin America constitute 'the rural areas of the world'. Since World War II the proletarian revolutionary movement has for various reasons been temporarily held back in the North American and West European capitalist countries, while the popular movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America has been growing vigorously. In a sense, therefore, the contemporary world situation also presents a picture of the encirclement of cities by the rural areas. In the final analysis the whole cause of world revolution hinges on the outcome of the revolutionary struggle of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples.... 54

Unity with Afro-Asian anti-imperialist struggles or Afro-Asian solidarity against imperialism thus remains something which is

53 CPC's "Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement". Text in Floyd, n. 37, p. 410.

54 Barnett, n. 51, pp. 242-43. Emphasis added. It should be noted that D. N. Aidit, the leader of the communist party of Indonesia was the first person to use the phrases "world countryside" and "world cities."

of "more than tactical importance"⁵⁵ in Chinese thinking on international politics.

Sino-Soviet differences were also reflected in their different policies especially in Asia and Africa. Since China regarded the Soviet-US detente as detrimental to the interests of the third world and the world revolution, it in fact worked against the detente to prevent it but failed. The Soviet Union on its part tried its best to bring China in line with itself. Khrushchov applied pressure. The Soviet economic aid to China was stopped, economic contracts were torn and the technicians were withdrawn, leaving several industrial plants unfinished. This was done in 1960.

Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated steadily. The first indication of the deteriorating relations surfaced during Khrushchov's visit to China in September/October 1959. The two parties found it impossible even to issue a joint communique. There was no common ground whatsoever. In February 1960, when the 'Camp David Spirit' was at its climax, Khrushchov called a meeting of Warsaw Pact countries to muster their support for the detente. At this meeting the Chinese "observer" Kang Sheng declared that any international agreement on disarmament or any other subject without the participation of China "cannot of course, have any binding force on China".⁵⁶ China severely

55 G. P. Deshpande, China's Policy in Africa 1949-64 (New Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1973), p. 1.

56 Extracts from the speech in Floyd, n. 37, p. 265.

criticized the Soviet Union for its "adventurism" and "capitulationism" during the Cuban crisis. Things came to such a pass within a couple of years that the Soviet Union demanded the recall of the Chinese embassy staff in Moscow in 1963.

In spite of Chinese opposition to the Partial Test Ban Treaty, it was signed by the Soviet Union with the US and Britain on 25 July 1963. China had completely failed in preventing the Soviet-US detente. It characterized the treaty as a "big fraud to fool the people of the world". Pointing out that the treaty was a reproduction of the Anglo-American draft of 27 August 1962 which had been rejected by the Soviet Union earlier, China, for the first time publicly accused the Soviet Union of having "sold out" the interests of the Soviet, Chinese and all peace-loving people of the world. The Chinese government statement on the question of nuclear weapons said, that "the indisputable facts" proved that the policy pursued by the Soviet Government, was "one of allying with imperialism to oppose socialism, allying with the US to oppose China, and allying with the reactionaries of all countries to oppose the people of the world."⁵⁷

It followed that the meaning of Afro-Asian Solidarity changed. In fifties it meant the solidarity against imperialism. In sixties it came to mean solidarity against both the

57 Text of the statement in SCMP, no. 3032, 2 August 1963, p. 32.

super powers and imperialism in general. For China the international situation of 1963 was different from that of 1955. In 1955 the Soviet Union was a "brother country", "a mainstay of peace", and the leader of the socialist camp. The most influential of non-aligned states - India - was a friend. However, in 1963, the former "brother country" and "a mainstay of peace" had become "an ally of US" and relations with India were completely spoiled. The US hostility of 1950s continued in 1960s also.

It is against this background that the present dissertation will try to examine China's attitude towards "Afro-Asian Solidarity" with special reference to the proposed Second Afro-Asian Conference at Algiers. In this regard the questions which will be answered in the following pages will be: (1) What was China's role at the First Afro-Asian Conference; (2) how did the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity develop between 1955-63; (3) why was China so keen about convening the Second Afro-Asian Conference and (4) what were the successes and failures of Chinese diplomacy regarding this conference.

Chapter II

CHINA AND THE FIRST AFRO-ASIAN CONFERENCE

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I

The initiative for convening the First Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung was taken by the Indonesian Government. The proposal was put forward before the premiers of Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan at the time of the Colombo meeting in 1954. Initially India and Burma were not very enthusiastic but by September 1954, India approved the idea of the conference and Burma fell in line.

The premiers of Colombo powers, met in Bogor (Indonesia) at the end of 1954 and laid down the concrete plans for the conference. The communique issued by these powers on 29 December 1954 spelt out the objectives of the conference. They were:

- (a) to promote goodwill and cooperation among nations of Asia and Africa, to explore and advance their mutual as well as common interests and to establish further friendliness and neighbourly relations;
- (b) to consider social, economic and cultural problems and relations of the countries represented;
- (c) to consider problems of special interest to Asian and African peoples, e.g., problems affecting national sovereignty and of racialism and colonialism;
- (d) to view the position of Asia and Africa and their peoples in the world of today and the contribution they can ~~make~~ to the promotions of the world peace and cooperation. 1

1 Bogor: Road to Afro-Asian Solidarity (Embassy of Republic of Indonesia, New Delhi, 1955), p. 25.

The premiers had agreed that the conference "should have a broad and geographical basis and that all countries in Asia and Africa, which have independent governments should be invited."² There were some exceptions, however, to this rule. The two Koreas, Outer Mongolia, Israel and South Africa were not invited.

At Bogor, no suggestion was made for inviting either the Soviet Union or any of its Central Asian Republics. In Djakarta, on 30 December 1954, Nehru was asked why the Soviet Asian Republics had not been invited. He replied that "Soviet Asia was not invited because, politically speaking it was a part of European unit, namely, Russia."³

What saved China from embarrassment was the Soviet stand on the conference. The Soviet Union had participated in the Asian Conference held in New Delhi from 6 to 10 April 1955 but it did not seek invitation to the Bandung Conference. It seems, the Soviet Union at this point of time did not take its Asianness seriously. The statement of V.V. Kuznetsov, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister of the Soviet Union, issued on 16 April 1955 is very revealing. The Deputy Minister wished success to the Bandung Conference. He supported the five principles of peaceful coexistence which, in his view were "a concrete expression" of the "inflexible will" of Afro-Asian peoples

2 Ibid., p. 26.

3 The Hindu (Madras), 31 December 1954.

for peace and national independence. He emphasized that "these principles are also winning increasing support among ⁴ the peoples of other continents." But in concluding paragraphs he spoke of the support only of the Soviet Union and its people to the Afro-Asian peoples' struggle against all forms of colonial rule. Clearly, the minister thought of the Soviet Union as a non-Afro-Asian state.

Like the Soviet Union, Turkey too is a country spread over two continents - Asia and Europe. But unlike the Soviet Union, Turkey was invited. Nehru's explanation was, that though "it was perfectly true that Kamal Ataturk gave a definite turn there towards Europe in every way and that influence had continued under his successors. But the fact remained that Turkey was in Asia and it could not easily get away from it."⁵

Addressing a press conference at Raj Bhawan, Bombay, immediately after his return from Bogor, Nehru said that the principal aim was to invite all independent countries for the conference. There were certain "border-cases" and exceptions to the rule, however. Gold Coast and Sudan, although not fully independent, were invited to give "more adequate representation" to Africa. The Indo-Chinese states were invited "although

4 Text of the Statement in New Times (Moscow), no. 17, 23 April 1955.

5 The Hindu, n. 3.

in some ways theirs were border line cases." ⁶ This was done because the Colombo Powers were "specially interested" in them. The interest of the Colombo Powers in these states was understandable, firstly, because Colombo proposals regarding the of Indo-Chinese states were accepted to a great extent by the Geneva Conference and therefore Indo-Chinese states were Colombo Powers' special responsibility, and secondly, Indochina was an important area from the point of view of peace in Asia. The two Koreas also constituted a border-line-case but they were not invited because there was "no question of personal sense of responsibility" ⁷ towards them.

Israel fulfilled the qualifications laid down by the Bogor Communiqué and could have been invited. The reason for not doing so, Nehru said, "was not very logical except for the fact that they (Colombo Powers) wanted to proceed on the basis

6 Ibid., 2 January 1955.

7 At this time neutralization of Indo-China was Nehru's main foreign policy objective in South East Asia. Neutralization of Indo-China was only partly guaranteed by the Geneva Agreements of 1954. Because of Cambodian fears of China and Vietnam, Norodom Sihanouk was planning to make Cambodia a party to SEATO and there was nothing in Geneva Agreements which could have prevented Cambodia from doing this. Nehru, being quite aware of these facts was trying to dissuade Cambodia from joining SEATO. One way of dissuading Cambodia was to encourage China and Vietnam to make more and more pledges of adherence to Panchshila and to allay the Cambodian fears. Nehru wanted to use the Bandung Conference specifically for this purpose. Therefore he was not concerned about the Korean participation in the conference. For a good analysis of Nehru's policy see D.R. Sardesai, Indian Policy in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam (Berkeley, 1968), pp. 6-7.

of unanimity".⁸ Arabs were hostile to Israel. It was impossible to proceed by unanimity if Israel were invited. The intention in keeping Israel out was "not to create a situation in which it would be difficult, for the Arab countries not to oppose another country like Israel."⁹ South Africa was left out because of its policy of racial discrimination.

By inviting Sudan and Gold Coast, by declaring support to the independence movements of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and by supporting Indonesia on the West Irian question, the Colombo Powers had made it clear that they were opposed to colonialism. Opposition to colonialism was also China's policy. Here was a common ground between China and the Colombo Powers. Quite logically, China welcomed the proposal of Afro-Asian conference.

Forming a united front against imperialism being the policy of China, it had started a search for allies in Asia and Africa. India, of course, was the first choice. India could be looked upon as the most important ally in Afro-Asia because of its anti-colonialism. There were several other reasons also. India was one of the first two powers which recognized the communist government in China as the only legitimate government of China. It was India, that most consistently supported the claim of Communist China to China's seat in the UN. It was

8 The Hindu, 2 January 1955.

9 Ibid.

India that worked for the settlement of Korean question. China must have valued the Indian efforts highly, especially because of the fact that in Korea China had got involved and suffered in a war which was neither in its national interests nor was of its making. India had also worked for peace in Indo-China before the Geneva Conference of 1954 and at the time of the conference. The Geneva Conference had nearly succeeded in keeping the US military bases out of the area which is of immense importance to China by reasons of its proximity.

II

The Bandung Conference was opened with Sukarno's speech on 18 April 1955. That was followed by the speeches of the delegates assembled. Chou En-lai like U Nu and Nehru had decided not to deliver a speech. But he wrote his speech and got it circulated to the delegates, on 19 April. Since his speech gives us Chinese ideas of how and why Afro-Asian solidarity could be achieved, an analysis of the speech becomes desirable.

Chou En-lai dwelt at length on things which, in his view, were common to Afro-Asian countries. In the past, the people of Afro-Asia had created brilliant civilizations. They had been subjected, in varying degrees, to the plunder and oppression of colonialism and were forced to remain in a state of stagnancy, poverty and backwardness. Repeating what had been said by People's Daily in its editorial welcoming the Conference proposal, he said: "Our voices have been suppressed, our

aspirations shattered and our destiny placed in the hands of others" and therefore, "we have no choice but to rise against colonialism."¹⁰ Because of the common experience of colonial oppression, Chou En-lai argued, that it would be easy for Afro-Asian countries to understand each other and to have sympathy for each other.

Chou En-lai emphasized that colonialism in Afro-Asia has not died. "New Colonialists" were taking the place of the old ones. Many in Afro-Asia were still leading a life of colonial slaves and the racial discrimination was still a reality. He argued that though the roads taken to achieve national independence by various countries differed from each other, the will to win and preserve independence was the same. Irrespective of the specific conditions in these countries, they had before them, the most formidable and common task of eliminating backwardness and of developing independent economies without external interference.

Chou En-lai told the conference that though the political independence was necessary, it was not enough. The Afro-Asian countries "including China" were "still very backward economically owing to the long period of colonial domination. That is why we demand not only political independence but

10 Text of Chou En-lai's Speech in Asian-African Conference: Live and Let Live in 'Unity in Diversity' (Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, New Delhi, n.d.), p. 158. Emphasis added. Cited hereafter as A.A. Conference.

economic independence as well."¹¹ He narrated, very briefly, the achievements of China's communist government, admitted that those achievements were very small and China was very backward compared to the other industrialized states, and added that like other Afro-Asian countries China too was "in urgent need of a peaceful international environment for the development" of its "independent sovereign economy."¹²

If peace was so badly needed by Afro-Asians, why could not they have peace? Because, there were enemies of peace in the world. Who were they? Of course, the United States and imperialism. Who was obstructing the development of "sovereign economies" of Afro-Asian countries? Again, Chou En-lai's answer was: imperialism headed by the United States. What was the evidence? There was enough of it. The US had endangered Geneva agreements. It was the US that had created tension in Taiwan area. "Countries from outside Asia and Africa" were establishing military bases in Afro-Asia and "making preparations for atomic war." And Chou En-lai reminded the Conference, that the first atomic bomb was exploded on Asian soil and that the first man to die from the experimental explosion of hydrogen bomb was also an Asian. The armament policy, therefore, had to be opposed by Afro-Asians.

Having said in the very beginning of the speech that

11 Ibid., p. 161.

12 Ibid. Emphasis added.

"economic independence" was the aim of Afro-Asians and that aim was as much important as the aim of achievement of political independence, Chou En-lai proceeded to further clarify China's stand on economic affairs. Economic independence, for him, did not mean the exclusion of economic co-operation with non-Afro-Asian countries. It meant abolishing exploitation of backward countries in the East by the colonial powers of the West and developing the "sovereign economies". Explaining how that was to be done, he gave what can be described as a protracted war approach of economic development. He said, Afro-Asians "will have to struggle for a long time",¹³ to develop their sovereign economies.

Afro-Asians could cooperate in economic development. Chou En-lai argued that such cooperation should be based on certain principles. It should be based on the principle of equality and mutual benefit. There should be no conditions attached to economic cooperation. The purpose of the cooperation should be the promotion of independent economic development of the countries involved and "not to convert any country to a sole producer of raw materials and a market for consumer goods."¹⁴

Chou En-lai pointed out that there were many problems in Asia and Africa awaiting solution. One of them was the

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., p. 163.

problem of Palestine refugees. He declared support for the independence movement of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia and upheld the claims of Egypt over Suez Canal, Indonesian claims over West Irian and Indian claims over Goa. All these claims had, according to him, won sympathy of Afro-Asian states. He also said that China's will to liberate Taiwan also had won support of righteous people of Afro-Asia. These 'facts' drove Chou En-lai to the conclusion that

the common desire of the awakened countries and peoples of Asia and Africa is to oppose racial discrimination and to demand for (sic) fundamental human rights, to oppose colonialism and to demand national independence, to firmly defend their own territorial integrity and sovereignty. 15

Chou En-lai demanded that the conference "ought to give expression to our common desires and thus make itself a treasured page in the history of Asia and Africa."¹⁶ In the interests of defending world peace, the urgent task was to cooperate first of all to eliminate suspicion and fear between the countries of these two continents. He expressed China's will to normalize relations even with Japan. In the end he proposed that the governments, parliaments and other peoples' organizations should arrange friendly visits to each other's countries.

15 Ibid., p. 162.

16 Ibid., p. 165.

When the heads of the delegations of various countries were making speeches, Chou En-lai sat in his chair listening attentively and making notes. There were many allies and potential allies of the US in the conference. They were, quite understandably, rather vehement critics of "communism". They seemed to be near unanimous in their attacks. At times even the words they used were almost the same. Iranian delegate spoke of "subversion" and "ideological interference". Iraqi delegate referred to "communist subversion" and characterized it as a "deadlier colonialism." He also called for "ideological disarmament." Mohammad Ali, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, opined that "ideological domination" was a "new and more insidious form of imperialism." Romulo, the Foreign Minister of the Philippines, saw the danger of "a new super barbarism, a new super imperialism", in the form of communism.

Most of the US allies, however, preferred to criticise the Soviet Union and communism rather than China. Only the delegate of a comparatively small and weak South East Asian country attacked China directly. He was Prince Wan of Thailand.

Prince Wan wanted to know the exact meaning of the Panchshila. He said the exact definition of peaceful coexistence was necessary because, Pridi Phanomyong, a Thai politician, was organizing and training Thai speaking Chinese and persons of Thai race in Yunnan province of China. The purpose was to subvert the Thai government. He also wanted to know the attitude of China towards the persons of "so-called" dual

nationality in Thailand who numbered 3,000,000 out of 18,000,000 of Thailand's population. He also raised the question of 50,000 Vietnamese refugees in Northeastern Thailand. He expressed his fear that in the light of past experience of invasion of Laos by Vietnamese communists in 1953 and 1954, "Thailand has had clearly to face a threat of infiltration and subversion if not of aggression itself."¹⁷

Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia drew attention of the conference to the fact that "Cambodia was on the separating line of the two worlds - "communist and non-communist." Being on the separating line of the two worlds, he said, Cambodia had a "dangerous privilege of standing the test and the application of the principles of Panchshila." He told the conference that Cambodia was determined to apply the principles of Panchshila but wanted others to prove their bonafides. It was, according to him, "the task of more powerful nations to set example, to give proof and guarantees to smaller nations and thereby to take the only course of action that is necessary to overthrow these barriers of suspicion and mistrust".¹⁸ Clearly, Prince Sihanouk was asking for guarantees from China.

These criticisms and the fears expressed by the delegates prompted Chou En-lai to make a supplementary speech on

17 The text of Prince Wan's speech in AA Conference, p. 151.

18 Prince Norodom Sihanouk's speech in ibid., p. 52.

19 April, the last day of the open session of the Conference. He walked to the front of the hall and after a few introductory words in Chinese, merely stood, while his interpreter read the speech.

Striking a moderate note in the very beginning, Chou En-lai said, "the Chinese delegation has come here to seek unity and not to quarrel...to seek common ground, not to create divergence...."¹⁹ There was a common ground between the countries represented there as most of them had suffered at the hands of colonialism. On the basis of this common ground it was easy for them to understand each other. It was possible to respect each other, sympathize with each other and give support to each other, in the attempts to do away with the sufferings and calamities that had resulted from colonial exploitation.

Chou En-lai asserted that in a century of struggle against imperialism the Chinese people won a victory under the leadership of the Communist Party. The revolution was "not imported from without." China was against external interference in its own affairs and it "could not want" to interfere in the internal affairs of others (in other words, China would not export revolutions).

Turning to the issues raised by Prince Wan, Chou En-lai said that the problem of dual nationality was "something left

19 The text of the supplementary speech in *ibid.*, p. 166.

behind by old China." The people's government of New China, however, was "ready to solve the problem of dual nationality of overseas Chinese with the government of the countries concerned".²⁰ He assured Prince Wan that the autonomy of Thai and Chuang people in China did not in any way constitute a threat to the neighbouring countries. He again expressed China's willingness to establish normal relations "with all the countries in the world, and first of all with our neighbouring countries."²¹

Chou En-lai referred to the problem of the KMT troops on Sino-Burmese border who carried subversion against both the countries and told the conference that since relations with Burma were friendly, he was confident, the problem could be solved. The real problem, as Chou En-lai understood it, was not one of communist Chinese subversion against the neighbours but rather of the US-KMT subversion against China. He told the delegates that he was aware, that there were doubts about China's intentions but that was the result of the absence of relations with each other. Quoting a Chinese saying, "better seeing once than hearing hundred times", he invited the delegates of all participating countries to visit China at any time they liked. He added, "we have no bamboo curtain, but some people are spreading a smoke-screen between us."²²

20 Ibid., p. 169.

21 Ibid. Emphasis added.

22 Ibid., p. 170.

Chou En-lai referred to the criticism that communism was an anti-religion doctrine. He did not deny that Chinese communists were atheists. But he maintained, "we respect all those who have religious beliefs" and expressed a hope that equally "those with religious belief will also respect those without."²³

Chou En-lai clearly avoided getting into a debate over ideology. He declined to talk about ideologies as that type of talk would create divergences and the Conference would be dragged into controversies. He was eager to see the Conference become a success. For the same reasons, he said, he would neither raise the issue of restoration of China's seat in the UN to the communist government, nor would he criticize the "unfair treatment" of China by the UN. "Although", he said, he "could have" asked the conference to consider the Taiwan question - he would not do that.

It has been argued by some writers that this was a very subtle way of raising issues.²⁴ There is some point in that argument. Nonetheless, the fact remains that China did not raise these issues when the various committees drafted the resolutions on colonialism and other subjects.

There were some important reasons why Chou En-lai strove

23 Ibid., p. 168.

24 See A. Doak Barnett, "Chou En-lai at Bandung", in AUSF Reports: Southeast Asia Series (New York, 1955), vol. 3, p. 76.

to keep Taiwan issue out of the discussions. Firstly, a good number of countries represented in the conference still regarded Chiang Kai-shek's government on the island of Taiwan as the legitimate government of China. Secondly, and this is more important, even Nehru was opposed to the discussion of Taiwan question in the conference. On 16 April Nehru had told the journalists at Bandung that "Formosa was a controversial question but could hardly be discussed as a specific issue at the Afro-Asian conference"²⁵. Again, China's position on Taiwan has been that it has a right to liberate Taiwan by any means.²⁶ Raising the issue of Taiwan would have either forced China to compromise its position on the use of force or would have resulted in a controversy and break up of the Conference. In the event of such a break up, the responsibility of the fiasco of the conference would have delved upon China. Chou En-lai naturally wanted to avoid that.

However, Chou En-lai seized the opportunity of the supplementary speech to reiterate China's position on Taiwan.

25 Times of India (Bombay), 17 April 1955.

26 See the following in the year 1950:

- 1) "No Smokescreen Around Taiwan", Peoples China, vol. 1, no. 2.
- 2) "Liberation of Taiwan in Sight", People China, vol. 1, no. 4.
- 3) "Chou En-lai's Statement on Security Council Decision", Peoples China, vol. 2, no. 2.
- 4) "Taiwan Shall Be Liberated", Peoples China, vol. 2, no. 5.

He declared that the will of the Chinese people to liberate Taiwan and the coastal islands was a "just" one and their liberation was "entirely a matter of our internal affairs and the exercise of our sovereignty."²⁷

Very sober and mild posture that Chou En-lai adopted throughout the conference disarmed quite a few of China's critics and won him friends among the aligned as well as non-aligned nations' delegates. Nehru remarked that "it was a very good speech."²⁸ John Kotlewala of Ceylon felt that it was a "very clever speech that avoided specifics",²⁹ and Nasser exclaimed, "Did I like the speech? Yes. All - very conciliatory."³⁰ As one observer of the Conference has put it, Chou En-lai's speech was "the climax of the first two days of open session of the conference."³¹

III

Since the leaders of the neighbouring countries were deeply suspicious of China's policy, Chou En-lai's first concern in and out of the conference hall was with allaying the fears of China's neighbours. On 20 April at a dinner attended

27 A.A. Conference, p. 167.

28 Times of India, 20 April 1955.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Barnett, n. 24, p. 77.

by Komulo, Prince Wan, and others, Chou En-lai told Prince Wan that Pridi Phanomyong was not in Yunnan organizing people for subverting Thai government, but he was in Peking as a mere political exile from Thailand. He also offered to negotiate a nationality treaty with Thailand to settle the question of the citizens of dual nationality in Thailand. When Prince Wan reminded Chou En-lai that Pridi Phanomyong was given an opportunity by Peking Radio to attack Thai government in 1954, Chou En-lai pleaded that "it was a mistake which would not be allowed to happen again."³² The offer of concluding a nationality treaty was made to Komulo also.

Chou En-lai invited Prince Sihanouk for a lunch where, according to the Prince, "Chou En-lai personally assured" him "that China will always faithfully adhere to the five principles (of co-existence) in its relations with Cambodia and have a friendly feeling towards" his country.³³ In a meeting of the representatives of North Vietnam and Laos arranged by Chou En-lai, North Vietnam assured Laos that the Vietnamese Communists would not support Laotian communists, who were entrenched in the northern districts of Laos.

China has always regarded Tibet as an internal part of its territory. It has always resented even a minor attempt by other countries of influencing China's policy in Tibet even

32 Ibid., p. 82.

33 quoted in George McTurnan Kahin, The Asian-African Conference (New York, 1956), p. 15.

before the Bandung Conference.³⁴ China has been rather sensitive on this question. At a dinner given by Nehru and attended by Romulo, Prince Wan, Chou En-lai and others, when Chou En-lai was asked if China wanted to communize Tibet, far from getting provoked, he laughed and said that Tibet was "very far from communism". When asked, if China was prepared to renounce force as a means of settling the Taiwan question, he replied that "America and Taiwan were using force against China" and he "could not give one sided assurances."³⁵

Sastroamidjojo, the Prime Minister of Indonesia, gave a luncheon on 23 April. Various issues were discussed at the time of luncheon. The meeting was on the point of breaking up when John Kotlewala asked Chou En-lai how he thought tensions could be relaxed in his part of the world. Chou En-lai replied that China was willing to negotiate with the US. Nehru inquired if Chou En-lai would state that publicly and Chou answered in positive. The same day Chou En-lai's statement was released to the press. It said:

The Chinese people are friendly to the American people. They do not want a war with the United States of America. The Chinese Government is willing to sit down and enter into negotiations with the United States Government to discuss the

34 See for example Notes exchanged between India and China in October/November 1950. Text of the notes in a supplement to People's China, vol. 2, no. 11, 1 December 1950.

35 G. H. Jansen, Afro-Asia and Non-alignment (London, 1966), p. 218.

question of relaxing tension in the Far East and especially the question of relaxing tension in the Taiwan area. 36

In the context of 1954 shelling of Quemoy and Matsu, by China and at a time when the prevailing impression of China was that of a bellicose country opposed to peaceful settlement of problems, this statement came as a bombshell. John Foster Dulles and the US allies in and out of the conference were quite unprepared for such a statement. Dulles dismissed it as a "propaganda". However, China's offer was applauded by many of the US friends. Mohammad Ali of Pakistan described it as "a great move". John Kotlewala remarked that the offer was "reasonable and sincere" and that the US had brushed it aside "without thinking". According to Komuro, American reaction to Chinese proposal created an impression that "America was spoiling for a fight". A British government spokesman in London described the Chinese offer as one which had "created a new situation". By making a short statement, Chou En-lai gained sympathy of many US allies and made the US appear, in the words of Jansen, "Churlish and intransigent".³⁷ And what is more surprising, these reactions came in spite of the clarification of the Chinese spokesman that China would not renounce its right to use force in Taiwan and that it did

36 The text of the statement in China and the Asian-African Conference (Peking, 1955), p. 28. Cited hereinafter as China and the A.A. Conference.

37 Jansen, n. 35, p. 219.

not want the ten power conference as proposed by the Soviet Union but preferred direct negotiations with the US (which would have left the KMT out of the negotiations).

In the Political Committee of the conference the delegate of Lebanon had said that the term "peaceful co-existence" was a communist term. Chou En-lai said he was prepared to use "Live together in Peace" from the preamble of the UN Charter. He blandly stated that "we are against formation of ever more antagonistic military alliances in the world because they heighten the crisis of war... We are against NATO, the Manila Treaty and other similar treaties".³⁸ Then he gave a warning that if such antagonistic military treaties continued in the world, "then we would be forced to find some countries to enter into and sign a similar, antagonistic military alliance in order to safeguard and protect ourselves against aggression."³⁹ Nobody questioned him on the Sino-Soviet Treaty.

Chou En-lai expressed his "gratefulness" to Mohammad Ali, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, for his explanation that "although Pakistan was a party to a military treaty, Pakistan was not against China. Pakistan had no fear China would permit aggression against her...if the United States launched

38 The text of Chou En-lai's statement in Political Committee, in Selected Documents of the Bandung Conference (New York, 1955), p. 24.

39 Ibid.

global war, Pakistan would not be involved in it." ⁴⁰ As a result of this explanation, Chou En-lai said, they had achieved mutual understanding. But the Pakistan's explanation notwithstanding, China remained opposed to military alliances. He also told the committee that he did "not believe in" Mohammad Ali's explanation that Manila Treaty was defensive in character. ⁴¹

There had been references to Comintern and Cominform in the speech of the delegate of Turkey. Chou En-lai's reaction to those references was that there were a great number of "other international organizations in the world", and he himself was "displeased with those other organizations", "for instance with the network of the United States Intelligence agency (sic) because we have been the victims of that agency." "Unfortunately", he said, he could not raise the question of international organizations and requested others not to do it, because it was impossible to reach any agreement and besides, ⁴² that was not on the agenda.

Chou En-lai told the committee that he felt that the US allies who sought to delink China from their criticism of the Soviet Union and Communism were making a "quite courteous" gesture, but he argued that as China was also ruled by the

40 Ibid., p. 25.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., pp. 25-26.

Communists he felt "involved" in that criticism. And then he proceeded to submit his "seven principles" of coexistence which, he assured, China would follow. They were: (1) respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, (2) abstention from aggression and threats against each other, (3) abstinence from interference or intervention in the internal affairs of one another, (4) recognition of equality of races, (5) recognition of equality of all nations, (6) respect for the rights of the people of all countries to choose freely a way of life as well as political and economic system, and (7) abstention from doing damage to each other.⁴³

Chou En-lai had formulated these principles because Mohammad Ali was not satisfied with the Panchshila. Mohammad Ali had in fact submitted his own seven principles for the conference recognition and one of them was the "right of self-defense exercised singly or collectively".⁴⁴ Although Chou En-lai had told the committee that he had formulated the seven principles because "every delegation here could not agree to the wording of those five principles or agree to all the five principles", his seven principles clearly show that they were not contrary to the Panchshila, and most important, they did not include "right of self-defense exercised singly or collectively" as demanded by Pakistan. Chou En-lai certainly wanted

43 Ibid., pp. 25-28.

44 For the text of Mohammad Ali's speech see A.A. Conference, p. 116.

to please Mohammad Ali but did not make any concession.

The delegates in the Conference had a tough time in the subcommittee on disarmament, where China took a rigid position. The discussion on the draft resolution on disarmament dragged on for more than seven hours. The draft had mentioned the necessity "to save mankind and civilization from the fears and prospect of total and wholesale destruction"⁴⁵. China demanded the deletion of the whole sentence because of its belief, that "what will be destroyed is not the whole of mankind but those who want to start an atomic war"⁴⁶. Nehru refused to concede this demand. China then insisted that at least the words "total" and "wholesale" be deleted. Nehru again refused to concede this. Finally, the word "total" was deleted and "wholesale" retained and the sentence, which in Nehru's view was scientifically accurate, was accepted by China.

The subcommittee on colonialism was established on 21 April. Even after two and a half days of discussion, it could not reach agreement on how to define "colonialism". The US allies insisted on the phrase "colonialism old and new". In the context of the anti-Soviet speeches made earlier by them "new colonialism" would have meant Soviet colonialism, if not Chinese colonialism. China, therefore, refused to accept that phrase. Then the phrase "colonialism in all its forms" was

45 Jansen, n. 35, p. 213.

46 Ibid.

suggested which was unacceptable to China like the earlier phrase. The issue was finally decided in the subcommittee on coexistence where V.K. Krishna Menon suggested "colonialism in all its manifestations" and was finally accepted by all.

On 10 March 1955 People's Daily had published an article on the subject of aid to Afro-Asian states by imperialist countries. It said:

From the past experience the Asian peoples have more and more come to realize the real meaning of American 'economic aid' a la Marshall. What the US calls economic aid is really a way of disposing its own surplus goods and bringing the receiver countries within the economic grip of American monopoly capitalism in the interests of US aggression.... It is now posing as the 'good partner' of the Asian people, hoping to continue the economic penetration of Asia through ostensibly private investment in the form of 'partnership'. 47

Jansen, therefore, is correct in pointing out⁴⁸ that China made a concession in accepting the resolution of the Conference which read that "assistance being received by certain participating countries from outside the region, through international or under bilateral agreements had made a valuable contribution⁴⁹ to the implementation of their development programmes."

When India and Burma wanted that a moderate stand be taken on Palestine question, Chou En-lai urged the adoption of

47 Peoples China, 1 April 1955, p. 37.

48 Jansen, n. 35, p. 217.

49 A.A. Conference, p. 206. Emphasis added.

a comparatively harshly worded resolution. The original draft said:

In view of the existing tension in the Middle East caused by the situation in Palestine and of the dangers of that tension to world peace, the Asian-African conference declares its support of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine and calls for the implementation of the United Nations' resolutions on Palestine and the peaceful settlement of the Palestine question. 50

To this, Chou En-lai wanted the conference to add, "under the condition of excluding the intervention by outside forces." The Conference frustrated Chou En-lai's desire. It was here that for the first time, China drew a parallel between the Palestine problem and Taiwan problem and asserted that neither could be solved peacefully unless intervention of outside forces was excluded.

In spite of this show of toughness on a couple of points, the general impression that the Chinese policy was moderate, persisted. When Nasser said that Chou En-lai was "a nice fellow and not aggressive at all",⁵¹ he spoke for most of the influential Afro-Asian statesmen present at Bandung.

IV

It is not necessary for our purpose to go into the achievements or failures of the Conference as such. But it

50 quoted in Kahin, n. 33, p. 16.

51 Times of India, 28 April 1955.

is necessary to determine how far the final communique and the ten principles enunciated therein, were in agreement with the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian solidarity.

A careful reading of the communique reveals that it did not amount to a Monroe Doctrine of Afro-Asia, though some people (and they were not communists) had hoped the conference would proclaim one. ⁵² quite contrary to their hope, the communique included many contradictory resolutions. This left room for all countries to interpret the document the way they liked.

In the foregoing discussion the concessions and the compromises made by China have been already noted. But the grip of ideology on the thinking of the ruling elite of China is so firm that we find China going back to ideology⁵³ within a month after the conference.

In his report to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China on 13 May 1955, Chou En-lai said that Bandung Conference had declared that colonialism in all its manifestations was an evil which should speedily be brought to an end. The phrase "in all its manifestations", he said, denoted "colonialism in its political, military, economic and social manifestations and there cannot possibly be any other interpretation". ⁵³ Of the ten principles of the

52 See for example the Times of India Editorial, 17 April 1955.

53 China and A.A. Conference, p. 35.

Bandung Conference, the fifth and the sixth contradicted each other. By the fifth principle, the conference had agreed to show "respect for the right of each nation to defend itself singly or collectively", as Pakistan had wanted. The sixth principle urged for "abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defence to serve the particular interests of the big powers."⁵⁴ Every nation was free to decide whether a particular collective security arrangement did or did not serve the interests of the big powers. Because of this vagueness, the delegate of Turkey had in fact described the Bandung Conference as a "success for SEATO".⁵⁵ Chou En-lai however, ignored this contradiction and told the Standing Committee of the NPC that "these provisions are actually a denunciation of this kind of aggressive military bloc."⁵⁶ The ten principles of the Bandung Conference included the Dullesian formula of "collective security" as well as Nehru's formula of "collective peace". But Chou En-lai argued that the ten principles were "an extension" of Panchshila.

The Conference had recognized the need of promoting economic development in Afro-Asia and had recorded the general desire for economic cooperation among the participating countries on the basis of mutual interest and respect for

54 A.A. Conference, p. 214.

55 Times of India, 28 April 1955.

56 China and the A.A. Conference, p. 43.

national sovereignty. It was made clear that this did not "preclude either the desirability or the need for cooperation with countries outside the region including the investment of foreign capital."⁵⁷ This was in complete disagreement with China's views on the subject. Quite understandably, in his report to the Standing Committee of the NPC, Chou En-lai did not comment on this resolution at all. There, he took a position which, though Marxist-Leninist, was contrary to Bandung resolutions. He argued that:

In their economic intercourse with the backward countries, the colonial powers always seek to secure various kinds of special privileges. These privileges are, in actuality, manifestations of colonialism. Therefore such economic intercourse can only worsen the stagnation and impoverishment of the backward countries and is no aid at all in the true sense of the word. 58

Chou En-lai admitted that the Afro-Asian countries have two main obstacles in their way of economic development. The first is lack of capital and the second is lack of technology. He told the Committee that lack of capital was not a great problem (as it is often made out to be), because "capital can be accumulated and technique acquired." The most essential thing in this respect for these countries was, "to develop their own production and rely on their own efforts".⁵⁹ As for

57 A.A. Conference, p. 205. Emphasis added.

58 China and the A.A. Conference, p. 45.

59 Ibid.

technology, he felt, "Japan could provide" technical assistance. No reference was made to the capability of Japan of investing the capital or the desirability of such investment in Afro-Asia.

Chou En-lai approvingly quoted Nehru's statement in Lok Sabha which said that the conference "presented no unfriendly challenge or hostility to anyone but proclaimed a new and rich contribution"⁶⁰. But he added, nonetheless, China could not forget that "the forces of war" would definitely refuse to stand aside to see "the development of the cause of peace", nor would they stand idly by to allow the expansion of the influence of the Afro-Asian Conference. He implied that the success of Afro-Asian Conference was in itself not a guarantee for peace and, "the struggle between the forces of peace and the forces of war is protracted and continuous"⁶¹, and "any relaxation of effort" was "not permissible". Here was the first pronouncement of the doctrine of the "protracted struggle for peace". Here was an approach that was distinct from most of the Afro-Asian statesmen's approach. And it was this approach which became one of the main subjects of Sino-Soviet polemics. However, at this stage, the Chinese ideas on the subject were not spelt out in detail. That was done during the years 1960-63.

60 Ibid., p. 55.

61 Ibid., pp. 55-56.

The Bandung Conference had urged that in order to achieve "effective cooperation for world peace", the membership of the United Nations be made universal. It had felt that the disarmament and prohibition of the production, experimentation and the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons were imperative to save mankind and civilization. The conference had also appealed to the "nations primarily concerned and to world opinion, to bring about such disarmament and prohibition".⁶² "Pending the total prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons", the Conference communique said, "all the powers concerned" should reach an agreement to suspend experiments with nuclear weapons. The States represented in the Conference agreed to cooperate to work to bring about the reduction of armaments and the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The basic flaw in the Conference's resolutions concerning war and peace was that, what it described as "nations principally concerned" were not of Africa and Asia. The Conference was silent on what the Afro-Asian States were to do if the nuclear powers went ahead with armament programmes and refused to cooperate with Afro-Asian states. After the Bandung Conference China and other Afro-Asian states developed different views on this question. China's views sharply differed from the approach of India as well as that of the Soviet Union.

62 A.A. Conference, p. 213.

These differences in turn created problems for the second Afro-Asian conference, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter III

THE CHANGING MEANING AND INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF THE CONCEPT OF AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY

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Commemorating the fifth anniversary of the Bandung Conference, People's Daily gave the Chinese definition of Afro-Asian Solidarity or the Bandung Spirit. It said that "the Bandung Spirit" was "the spirit of solidarity and cooperation of the peoples of Asia and Africa in opposing imperialism and colonialism and their fight to gain and safeguard world peace and national independence...."¹ Thus, in the post-Bandung period, the Chinese ideas of "safeguarding world peace and national independence" also came to be a part of its concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity. In this chapter it is intended (1) to examine those ideas and to identify the factors that were responsible for China's attaching increasing importance to Afro-Asian Solidarity; and (2) to record China's efforts of getting African and Asian support for the Second Afro-Asian Conference.

I

In his visit to China in 1959, Khrushchov informed the Chinese leaders that he had put forward the proposals for "general and complete disarmament" with effective controls. In his view, the proposals were important because given a proper response by other nations, they could bring about "a

1 Text in Peking Review, vol. 3, no. 16, 19 August 1960, p. 7.

fundamental change in the relationship among nations"² and then no country would feel uneasy that it might be subjected to attack. He said that a general and complete disarmament would be "a concrete guarantee for peaceful coexistence and the development of friendly relations among countries...." and added that the prospects for disarmament were bright because the leaders of the US³ were showing "a tendency to understand the world realities" and also that they desired relaxation of international tension. It was very soon after this visit that China spelt out its views in detail on the issues raised by Khrushchov.

According to China, the modern wars are the result of imperialist exploitation. During the "so-called peace" between the wars, the extension of the rule of monopoly capital continues. As a result of the exploitation by the monopoly capital the wars will occur. Mere conclusion of disarmament or peace treaties does not guarantee peace. Moreover these treaties⁴ "can at any moment be scrapped by the imperialists", who by their very nature will never "lay down the butcher's knife" and "turn into buddhas" (sic), nor will they "sell their knives and buy oxen".

2 Text of Khrushchov's Speech at Peking Airport in Peking Review, no. 40, 6 October 1959, p. 11. Emphasis added.

3 Ibid.

4 Yu Chao-li, "Imperialism - Source of War in Modern Times - and the Path of the Peoples' Struggle for Peace." Red Flag article reprinted in Peking Review, vol. 3, no. 5, 12 April 1960, p. 17.

China characterized the contradiction between imperialism on the one hand and the colonies and semi-colonies on the other, as an antagonistic contradiction. Even during the period when imperialism is becoming weaker, it would not relinquish the domination of colonies and semi-colonies. The antagonistic contradiction would not be nonantagonistic making its peaceful resolution impossible. Thus, "national liberation wars will not be unnecessary."⁵ In other words, "just wars" being inevitable the international tensions would continue, disarmament or no disarmament.

China rejected the Soviet view that disarmament would bring about "a fundamental change in the relationship among nations." It also rejected the view that disarmament could be relied upon for the realization of peace. It argued that by strengthening the "militant will of the world's people" with the backing of socialist camp, peace could be won and defended "through broadly based, just struggles".⁶ The peace-struggle had to be an extremely broad based movement and in this movement, it was "fully feasible to mobilize all who can possibly join the struggle, thus completely isolating the imperialist war forces".⁷

5 Ibid., p. 19.

6 Yu Chao-li, "Excellent Situation for the Struggle for Peace." Red Flag article reprinted in Peking Review, vol. 3, no. 1, 5 January 1960, p. 19.

7 Ibid., p. 23.

The peace-movement as envisaged by China, was to be a united front of four categories of peace forces. Unity of the socialist camp based on adherence to Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism was a decisive force and the socialist camp constituted the core of the united front.⁸ The second category was of the national liberation movements and wars, which were regarded as "an important and indispensable force".⁹ The anti-imperialist struggle of the "countries which have already won national independence" (and which might have bourgeoisie governments), constituted the third category of peace forces.¹⁰ The workers movements and peace-loving people the world over constituted the fourth category. The task of the people who were interested in realization of peace was not to disarm these forces, but it was rather to arm them in order "to continue to develop a situation in which the East wind prevails over the West wind".¹¹

China advocated the use of two "peace tactics" to counter the tactics of war forces. The first of the two "peace tactics" was to expose the "peace fraud" of imperialists and the

8 "The Decisive Force in the Preservation of World Peace". Peoples Daily editorial of 6 February 1960. Text in Peking Review, vol. 3, no. 6, 9 February 1960, p. 8. Emphasis added.

9 Ibid., p. 9.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

second was to prepare for "just wars" to end "unjust wars". The disarmament proposals and negotiations were to be used as the first tactic - "to unmask the aggressive and belligerent nature of imperialism..." - in order to isolate them to such an extent that they dare not unleash a war.¹² As for the view that after disarmament is realized, the funds earlier earmarked for armament would be used for the welfare of the people and for assisting underdeveloped countries, and that it would bring general progress to all people without exception; China described it as "downright whitewashing and embellishing imperialism".¹³

China argued that disarmament agreement could not really be reached as long as imperialism existed. Even if an agreement were possible, imperialists could any time tear it to pieces; and "even if in their own interests imperialists dared not unleash a nuclear war, they can still wage war with so-called conventional weapons...."¹⁴ Again, it was wrong to assume that since disarmament negotiations were needed, the struggle of the peace forces could be dispensed with. On the contrary the negotiations must be backed up by the struggle of the peace forces. The full use of the peace tactics must be

12 Liu Chang-Sheng, "On the Question of War and Peace". Text in Peking Review, vol. 3, no. 24, 14 June 1960, p. 14.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

made and the contradictions between the imperialist countries must be exploited.¹⁵

The definition given in the beginning of this chapter shows that like the question of safeguarding peace, the question of safeguarding national independence was important in Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity. It has been pointed out in the second chapter that in the Bandung Conference China compromised its position on the question of western economic aid to Afro-Asian countries. It has also been shown that after the Bandung Conference, Chou En-lai took a position on this question which was consistent not with the Bandung resolutions but with China's pre-Bandung position.¹⁶ In the early sixties China not only elaborated its views on this question but also linked those views with its views on preserving national independence. Thus, the views on the question of imperialist investment in Asia and Africa also came to be a part of Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity. ✓

These views were spelt out very clearly in the second Afro-Asian Economic Conference held in May 1960 at Cairo. In this conference a proposal for the establishment of an "Afro-Asian investment association" came up for discussion. China opposed this proposal on the ground that such an association, no matter what the sponsor's subjective will, was "bound to

15 Ibid.

16 See pp. 51 and 55.

become, objectively, a bridge for the madly ambitious international corporations of imperialist countries", and would leave the doors of Afro-Asia wide open to the penetration of imperialist capital. The penetration of imperialist capital was, in China's view, diametrically opposed to the genuine interests of the development of independent economies of Afro-Asian countries. The Chinese delegate in the conference said, that the history would prove that countries pinning their hopes on imperialist aid would "inevitably be forced to give up national sovereignty for foreign aid", and the result could "only be, the more the aid the poorer it (the aid receiving country) becomes...."¹⁷ To avoid this, he advocated the policy of self-reliance and co-operation of the Afro-Asian countries on the basis of equality and mutual interest and urged the Afro-Asian countries to oppose the imperialist aid or investment.

To sum up, it can be said that during the period from Bandung Conference to about 1960, the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian solidarity came to mean unity of Afro-Asian countries on the basis of (1) peaceful coexistence, (2) opposition to imperialism old and new, (3) increasing the material and military strength of national liberation movements and other peace forces, (4) supporting the disarmament agreements arrived at after the deliberations in which all big and small nations are

17 Excerpts from Chinese Delegate's Statement, in Peking Review, vol. 13, no. 19, 10 May 1960, p. 15.

represented and opposing the disarmament as proposed by the US and Soviet Union, (5) economic cooperation of Afro-Asian countries on the basis of mutual interest, (6) cautioning against the investment of imperialist capital in Asia and Africa, and (7) solving the disputes among Afro-Asian countries by "adopting an approach of friendship and mutual accommodation and by persisting in the methods of peaceful consultations."¹⁸

II

Since the popularity of non-alignment in post-Bandung period has directly affected the Chinese diplomacy regarding the Second Afro-Asian Conference, it is necessary to examine the nature of non-alignment and the nature of differences between the concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity and non-alignment. The examination of the transactions and the declaration of Belgrade Conference of non-aligned nations is useful for this purpose.

During the Belgrade Conference, Sukarno and Nehru differed sharply on the question of priorities in international relations. Sukarno declared that the basic problems besetting the world arose from the two radical processes in world history. The first was, the process of liberation of colonized people

18 Speech of Liao Cheng-Chih, Chairman of the Chinese Committee for Afro-Asian Solidarity. Text in Peking Review, vol. 3, no. 13, 22 March 1960, p. 12.

and the second was, the "process of emancipation from poverty and injustice". The two processes were "like Siamese twins"¹⁹ and would die if they were separated from each other. Therefore, he urged the conference, among other things, to demand immediate cessation of colonial wars and to set a time limit of maximum two years for the removal of colonial vestiges from all parts of the world.

Nehru's views came in sharp conflict with those of Sukarno. Nehru's approach in the conference was one of "emphasizing the dangers implicit in the possibility of a war between the USSR and the USA. He thought that was the most urgent and pressing problem before the world. Other problems, however important in absolute terms were secondary in comparison with this central problem."²⁰ In his speech to the conference, he observed complete silence on the question of extending support to liberation wars and thus made it clear that he was not much concerned about this question.²¹ The subject he chose to speak on was disarmament negotiations between the US, Soviet Union and Britain and not the liberation movements in Asia and Africa. But even regarding the disarmament

19 Text of Sukarno's Speech, in Review of International Affairs (Belgrade), vol. 12, nos. 274-75, p. 11

20 G.P. Deshpande, China's Policy in Africa 1949-66 (New Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1973), p. 66.

21 For the Text of Nehru's Speech see Review of International Affairs, n. 19, p. 21.

negotiations, he said, he had doubts if the conference could suggest the lines on which the negotiations be conducted by nuclear powers. He thought making suggestions in that regard was neither possible nor suitable, because he believed, that though "the only possible way" to solve the problem of international tension was complete disarmament, it would be "absurd" to set a time limit for the completion of that task.²² He was prepared to leave these things to the nuclear powers.

In the conference, Indonesia wanted condemnation of the Netherlands on the question of West Irian. Cuba wanted condemnation of United States. African delegates wanted condemnation of France on its nuclear testing over Sahara and its military base in Bizerta. Ghana wanted the conference to recognize Africa as a nuclear free-zone. The delegates of these countries tried their best to get Nehru to agree with them but Nehru stubbornly refused to yield to pressures. His firmness angered them so much, that a whispering campaign that India was playing the western game by trying to focus attention on disarmament to the exclusion of all else and allowing the colonialists to get away with repressive policies, was launched.²³ But in spite of this campaign and differences Nehru's voice finally prevailed. The contents of the Declaration of the Belgrade Conference show that Nehru's views were accepted by

22 Ibid.

23 Times of India, 4 September 1961.

the conference as its own.

It is necessary to note three important resolutions of the Belgrade Conference. (1) The conference "rejected the view that war, including 'cold war', was inevitable", as that view reflected "a sense of both helplessness and hopelessness and was contrary to the progress of the world".²⁴ (2) The second important resolution said that "peace and stability" in the world depended "to a considerable extent, on the mutual relations of the Great Powers".²⁵ (3) The conference held the view that achievement of disarmament was a primary task. Therefore it recommended that disarmament conferences be held under the auspices of the UN, that non-aligned nations be represented in those conferences, and that disarmament be guaranteed by an effective system of inspection and controls, the teams of which would include a representative of the non-aligned group.

It can be seen that the views expressed in the second and the third resolution conflicted with the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity. The views expressed in the second resolution were too super-power centric to be acceptable to China. As far as "stability" in world politics was concerned, China held not only that there was nothing sacred about stability but that an instability that increased the strength of

24 Text of the Belgrade Declaration in Review of International Affairs, n. 19, p. 43.

25 Ibid., p. 44.

'peace forces' was most welcome. "Peace", in Chinese view, depended not on the mutual relations of the Great Powers but on the unity of socialist camp, national liberation movements and anti-imperialist struggle of the newly liberated nations. As far as the third resolution was concerned, China could not accept that disarmament was a primary task because in its view strengthening the 'peace forces' was a primary task and not disarmament. In Chinese view, the disarmament proposals as put forward by the US were to be opposed because they would not help in developing a situation in which the East Wind would prevail over the West Wind. Moreover, (1) the US was declaring time and again that it would maintain military superiority at all costs; (2) the US did not rule out the possibility of "local wars"; and (3) the US was placing the cart before the horse by stressing the question of supervision while avowing that it was quite impossible to conceive of a system of supervision that would be entirely reliable.²⁶

Nehru's ideas were wellknown even before the Belgrade Conference endorsed them. But China had probably not fully realized the implications of non-alignment and did not think in terms of propagating the concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity as an alternative to non-alignment. From 1956 China had been

26 "Paving the Bright Road of Disarmament" People's Daily Editorial. Abridged Text in Peking Review, vol. 3, no. 3, 19 January 1960, p. 10.

celebrating the anniversary of the Bandung Conference and it did so in 1960 too. But neither the People's Daily editorial nor Kuo Mo-jo's speech which hailed the successes of the First Afro-Asian Conference, mentioned the need to convene the Second Afro-Asian Conference, which confirms this conclusion.

It was in the early months of 1961 that China started moving to muster support for the Second Afro-Asian Conference and to project Afro-Asian Solidarity as being a more important concept than the concept of non-alignment. Marshal Chen Yi paid a visit to Indonesia from 28 March to 2 April 1961. On his way to Djakarta he stopped at Rangoon airport and answered the questions put to him by the correspondent of a Mandalay newspaper named Ludu (People's Daily). In an answer to one question he said that the Chinese Government supported the proposal of convening the Second Afro-Asian Conference, because such a conference would play "a positive role in the struggle against imperialism". Also, he expressed "a hope" that "the five countries of the Colombo Conference will sponsor it."²⁷ Expressing such a hope in the capital of Burma was making clear that China would like the Burmese Government to take an initiative in the matter; but the Burmese Government did not make any move to convene the Second Afro-Asian Conference.

Indonesia had been trying to muster international support to its claims over the West Irian and it has been pointed

27 Peking Review, vol. 4, no. 14, 7 April 1961, p. 9.

out earlier that Bogor and Bandung conferences supported Indonesia's claims. It seems Indonesia had pinned its hopes on the possible support of the non-aligned conference too, which was to be held in September 1961. Therefore, though the Sino-Indonesian joint communique of April 1961 mentioned that the two countries "deemed it very necessary" to convene the Second Afro-Asian Conference "in the shortest time" (sic), it did not say anything on the need to strengthen the Afro-Asian Solidarity against imperialism nor did it suggest any date for the Second afro-Asian Conference.²⁸

Sukarno miserably failed to get the support of the Belgrade Conference. Neither Nehru's speech nor the Belgrade Declaration made any reference to the West Irian question. It was then that Sukarno said, that "non-aligned conference must be complementary to the Afro-Asian Conference" and that it was necessary to convene the Second Afro-Asian Conference.²⁹

China had watched the Belgrade Conference and India's stand on the question of opposition to imperialism and support to liberation struggles had not gone unnoticed. Noting the Indian stand, People's Daily said, "somebody at the conference also advanced these arguments: The era of classic colonialism is gone and dead, and anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist and

28 Text of the Communique in ibid., p. 8.

29 quoted in Peking Review, vol. 4, no. 37, 15 September 1961, p. 6.

anti-racial struggles were secondary".³⁰ Expressing its unhappiness with non-aligned softness on imperialism, China fully supported Indonesia's proposal of Second Afro-Asian Conference and also endorsed Sukarno's statement that the non-aligned conference must be complementary to Afro-Asian³¹ Conference.

During 1961 and 1962 both Indonesia and China were eager to hold the Second Afro-Asian Conference. However, only Indonesia worked to get the support of major Afro-Asian countries for the conference proposal. It is important that though Indonesia worked because it wanted the Second Afro-Asian Conference's support to its claim over the West Irian, it never closed the option of getting support from any other conference. It was due to Indonesian efforts that the UAR which regarded the Second Afro-Asian Conference as unnecessary and India which was unenthusiastic in 1961, changed their positions and approved of the idea of the conference and it was agreed that the preparatory meeting be held in December 1962.³² Burma and Ceylon which were unwilling in 1961 also fell in line with India. However, the work done by Indonesia was suddenly undone by the Sino-Indian border war of Oct/Nov 1962. The preparatory committee could not meet and the conference proposal was

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid., p. 7.

32 G.H. Jansen, Afro-Asia and Non-alignment (London, 1966), p. 323.

forgotten for the time being.

It is not necessary for our present purpose to go into the merits or demerits of Indian or Chinese case in the Sino-Indian dispute, but it is necessary to note the reaction of Afro-Asian and especially of non-aligned countries to the Sino-Indian war. It is true that only Cyprus and Malaya supported India publicly and the support to India from non-aligned was much less than what the Indians expected. But it is also true that quite a few countries expressed sympathy for India.³³

What is more important, not even one non-aligned state expressed sympathy for China or supported Chinese case. Added to this were the Colombo proposals for the settlement of Sino-Indian dispute which though they did not concede all demands of India, taken together with the "clarifications" given by Mrs. Bandaranaike, met most of the Indian demands. That was why India accepted the proposals whereas China, by February 1963, rejected them. The Colombo Powers' non-alignment inevitably became still more suspect in Chinese eyes.

At the time of the First Afro-Asian Conference China had India as a friend. After 1960 Indonesia replaced India as China's friend. Since it has been suggested that China befriended Indonesia because Sukarno "appeared not merely to be enamoured of Marxism in general but of Maoist variant in particular",³⁴ and since Sino-Indonesian friendship

33 For details see ibid., pp. 326-27.

34 Sheldon W. Simon, The Broken Triangle: Peking, Diakarta and the PKI (Baltimore, 1969), p. 13.

also affected China's position regarding the Second Afro-Asian Conference, it is necessary to find out whether Sino-Indonesian friendship was based on identity of views.

It has been mentioned earlier that Marshal Chen Yi visited Indonesia in March/April 1961. This visit proved that compared to 1955-60 the relations between the two countries were better. But there is nothing to prove that they had identity of views. On the contrary the speeches made by Marshal Chen Yi and Sukarno reveal that they had differences of opinion. In the banquet speech, Marshal Chen Yi after thanking Sukarno said that, "China and Indonesia had reached a unanimity of views." However, Sukarno in his speech "noted that, viewed fundamentally, there was no big divergence between Indonesia and China."³⁵ Marshal Chen Yi wished an identity of views whereas Sukarno made clear that there was no identity of views and there was "no big divergence".

Take again the Indonesia's position in the Belgrade Conference. It has been pointed out that Indonesia, in contrast to India, took a staunch anti-imperialist stand because that stand was directly linked with Indonesia's claims to West Irian, which was still under the Dutch colonial rule. In other words, Indonesia's anti-imperialism was related with its national interests and had nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism or its "Maoist variant". As far as China was concerned,

35 Texts in Peking Review, vol. 4, no. 14, 7 April 1961, p. 10. Emphasis added.

according to its concept of Afro-Asian solidarity, it had declared that it would support anti-imperialist struggles be they led by communists or non-communists. Indonesia must have valued Chinese support especially because the non-aligned conference did not support Indonesia.

Indonesia gained control of West Irian in 1962 when an agreement was reached with the Dutch Government on 15 August 1962. But in 1963 Indonesia again needed international support for its stand on another issue. The issue was the scheme of the formation of Malaysia, which was to include Singapore and North Borneo with Malaya in a federal state. According to this scheme the British military base was allowed to remain in Singapore. Against the background of the British and US aid to PRRI rebellion in 1958 against Sukarno's Government, ³⁶ Indonesia saw in Malaysia a new threat to its security and therefore opposed the scheme and wanted international support to its stand. Here again China readily offered support and the Sino-Indonesian friendship continued. In short, the Sino-Indonesian friendship was based on limited agreement of views. It was not based on the agreement on the concept of Afro-Asian solidarity nor on the agreement on Marxism or its "Maoist variant".

36 For the details of British and US involvement in this rebellion see Daniel S. Lev, "America, Indonesia, and the Rebellion of 1958", United Asia (Bombay), vol. 17, pp. 305-9.

III

By March 1963 Sino-Soviet differences reached a new stage. On 20 March, the CPSU sent a letter to CPC presenting its views on the general line of the international communist movement. In an answer to the CPSU letter CPC put forward its own proposal concerning the general line of international communist movement. It is interesting to see what place the concept of Afro-Asian solidarity had in the perspectives of the two parties at this stage.

According to the Soviet Union, the socialist system was exerting an evergrowing influence on the course of world development. The revolutionary process was developing under direct influence of the new example provided by the new life in socialist countries. Therefore, CPSU argued that those who wanted the victory of socialists should, "in the first place, show concern for strengthening the great socialist community and its economic might, should seek to raise the standards of living of its people", develop science, engineering and culture, consolidate its unity and its growth of its international authority.³⁷ The CPSU letter said that the "rising standards of living" in socialist countries and "the achievements of socialist commonwealth will constitute a sort of catalyst" in "broadening the class struggle in the capitalist countries and

37 Text of the letter in The Great Debate: Selected Writings on Problems of Marxism-Leninism Today (New Delhi, 1963), pp. 385-86. Emphasis added.

enable the working class to triumph over capitalism".³⁸ The letter further argued that the militant call "workers of the world unite" formulated by Marx and Engels meant that "at the basis of this unity lies anti-imperialist class solidarity and not any other principle of nationality colour or geographical location".³⁹ And finally, it accused China of uniting the masses against imperialism "solely on the basis of their be-⁴⁰longing to a particular continent."

In a reply letter to the CPSU, the CPC repudiated the Soviet view which, according to CPC, recognized only the contradiction between the socialist and the imperialist camps "while neglecting or underestimating" the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist world, "between the oppressed nations and the imperialism", among the imperialist countries and among the monopoly capitalist groups and the struggles to which these contradictions gave rise....⁴¹ The CPC letter stated that the anti-imperialist struggle of Afro-Asian and Latin American people was "definitely not merely a matter of regional significance but one of overall importance for the whole cause of proletarian

38 Ibid., p. 389. Emphasis added.

39 Ibid., p. 398. Emphasis added.

40 Ibid.

41 Text of the letter in Peking Review, vol. 4, no. 25, 21 June 1963, p. 7.

world revolution".⁴² The CPC then levelled a serious charge saying that:

...certain persons (the CPSU leaders) are going so far as to deny the great international significance of the anti-imperialist revolutionary struggles of the Asian African and Latin American peoples and on the pretext of breaking down the barriers of nationality, colour and geographical location are trying to do their best to efface the line of demarcation between oppressed and oppressor nations and to hold down the revolutionary struggles of the peoples in these areas. 43

Coming to the subject of the relative importance of Asia and Africa in the world revolution, the letter said that it was "impossible for the working class in the European and American capitalist countries to liberate itself unless it unites with the oppressed nations and unless those nations are liberated."⁴⁴ The Marxist-Leninists' attitude to the liberation struggles must be one of "warm sympathy". They must not adopt "a perfunctory attitude, or one of national selfishness or of great power chauvinism."⁴⁵ The letter also characterized revisionism⁴⁶ as the main danger to international communism.

Because of basically different views on the importance of Afro-Asian Solidarity the two parties continued to diverge.

42 Ibid., p. 9.

43 Ibid. Emphasis added.

44 Ibid., pp. 9-10. Emphasis added.

45 Ibid., p. 13.

46 Ibid., p. 20. Emphasis added.

In spite of the Chinese opposition to the disarmament negotiations in which the small and non-nuclear countries had no say, the Soviet Union went ahead with its talks with the US and Britain. On 25 August 1962, two days before the US and Britain put forward the draft of the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the Soviet Union informed China that Dean Rusk, the US Secretary of State, had proposed an agreement stipulating that nuclear powers should undertake to refrain from transferring nuclear weapons and the information concerning their manufacture to non-nuclear countries; and non-nuclear countries should undertake to refrain from seeking the nuclear weapons or the information concerning their manufacture from nuclear powers. The Chinese Government sent memoranda to the Soviet Government on 3 September 1962, 20 October 1962 and 6 June 1963 restating Chinese opposition to the proposed Partial Test Ban Treaty.⁴⁷

The Partial Test Ban Treaty was signed on 25 July 1963. The Chinese Government statement issued on 31 July 1963 criticized and opposed the treaty on the ground that by this treaty the three signatories attempted to consolidate their nuclear monopoly and bind the hands of all non-nuclear countries" and that the treaty could not have restraining effect on "the US policies of war preparations and nuclear blackmail." Moreover,

47 "A Comment on the Soviet Government's Statement of 3 August 1963". The text in Peking Review, vol. 6, no. 33, 16 August 1963, p. 15. Soviet Union has not contradicted this.

the treaty in "no way hindered the US from proliferating nuclear weapons and expanding nuclear armament".⁴⁸

It was only after this treaty was signed that China publicly accused Soviet Union of pursuing a policy of "allying with the forces of war to oppose the forces of peace, allying with imperialism to oppose socialism, allying with the United States to oppose China and allying with the reactionaries of all countries to oppose the people of the world."⁴⁹ Red Flag commentator likened the three signatories of the treaty with the signatories of "Holy Alliance" of 1815, accused the Soviet Union of having placed itself in the ranks of a "new Holy Alliance" and predicted for the "new Holy Alliance" the fate that had befallen on the Holy Alliance. It followed that Afro-Asian Solidarity now came to mean among other things, opposition to revisionism and the "new Holy Alliance".⁵⁰

The three countries had signed the Partial Test Ban Treaty for their own reasons and not because the non-aligned countries wanted them to sign it. Nevertheless, the three signatories had done just what the non-aligned countries desired in the first non-aligned nations conference. So, they had reasons to be happy about the treaty. In the atmosphere

48 Text of the Statement in Peking Review, vol. 6, no. 31, 12 August 1963, p. 7.

49 Ibid., p. 8.

50 Translation of the comment in Peking Review, vol. 6, no. 41, 11 October 1963, pp. 12-14.

of enthusiasm generated by this treaty in the non-aligned circles, the proposal for convening the second non-aligned nations conference came up. Mrs. Bandaranaike, the Prime Minister of Ceylon, conferred with Nasser in Cairo in mid-October 1963 and their joint communique mentioned the necessity of the second non-aligned nations conference in 1964; because they had "a profound conviction that the conference would create a better understanding between states and help towards easing world tension."⁵¹ It was quite logical to take it for granted that the second non-aligned nations' conference would tread on the course laid down by the first conference. Given the differences between the non-alignment and the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity this was an alarming situation for China.

However, it was not only the non-alignment of Nehru, Nasser and Tito that was competing with the Chinese Afro-Asian Solidarity. Sukarno too became competitive in 1963. Not only that he was propounding the concept of New Emerging Forces rather vehemently but he was also advocating the convening of the Conference of the New Emerging Forces,⁵² where he could have worked for getting support to Indonesia's stand on Malaysia. In view of the developing profound differences between China and the Soviet Union, China must have found it a little

51 quoted in Jansen, n. 32, p. 366.

52 See Sukarno's Independence Day Speech on 17 August 1963. Text in George Modelski, ed., The New Emerging Forces: Documents on the Ideology of Indonesian Foreign Policy (Canberra, 1963), p. 124.

galling that the Indonesians should categorize the Soviet Union as a New Emerging Force.⁵³ Consequently, China could not have been very enthusiastic about the proposal of the conference of the New Emerging Forces. Further, although Sukarno had, in 1961, very clearly indicated that the conference of the non-aligned could only be secondary to the conference of the Asian-African states, he agreed to attend it when he discovered by 1963 that the proposal for a second non-aligned meet was gaining ground.⁵⁴ Sukarno, from the Chinese point of view was thus not a very reliable ally who would give the Asian-African conference the top priority. In other words China had to take the initiative.

IV

When with all this in mind Chou En-lai started his African Safari on 14 December 1963, Afro-Asian Solidarity had become more important to China than it was in the second half of the fifties and the first two years of sixties. In 1960 China had regarded "the unity of the socialist camp" as a "decisive force" in the struggle for peace and the socialist

53 In the speech mentioned in the footnote above Sukarno had said that the "New Emerging Forces" "composed of the Asian Nations, the African Nations, the Latin American Nations, the Nations of socialist countries, (and) the progressive groups in the capitalist countries...." "Socialist countries" of course included the Soviet Union.

54 Jansen, n. 32, p. 366.

camp as the "core" of the United front for peace and struggle against imperialism. The national liberation wars were considered to be the second "important and indispensable force" in this united front.⁵⁵ When Chou En-lai started his African Safari, People's Daily editorial characterized Afro-Asian Solidarity as "a most important factor in the defence of world peace."⁵⁶ The leader of the socialist camp having decided to go ahead with its "co-operation" with imperialism as stipulated in the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, and China having failed to dissuade the Soviet Union from taking that path between 1959-63, socialist camp ceased to be most important. Therefore, Afro-Asian Solidarity i.e. the unity of the communists with the national liberation wars and the anti-imperialist struggles of the Afro-Asian governments and peoples became the most important force in the united front against imperialism. Quite understandably, Chou En-lai aimed at mustering support for the proposal of convening the Second Afro-Asian Conference and for the concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity during his African Safari.

The first African country to be visited by Chou En-lai was the UAR. Chou En-lai had to make his priorities and preferences clear in a very round about way in the UAR. Because,

55 See Section I of this chapter.

56 Text of the Editorial in Afro-Asian Solidarity against Imperialism: A Collection of Documents, Speeches, and Press Interviews, from the Visits of Chinese Leaders to Thirteen African and Asian Countries (Peking, 1964), p. 426. Emphasis added. Cited hereinafter as A.A. Solidarity.

firstly, the UAR was a member of the non-aligned group and had played an important role with India and Yugoslavia in popularizing the non-alignment. It would have been politically unwise to speak in harsh terms about the non-alignment. Secondly, the UAR had warm relations with the Soviet Union.

Keeping these constraints in mind Chou En-lai conducted himself in the UAR. In his speech at the reception on 14 December in Cairo, he paid tributes to UAR's participation in the First Afro-Asian Conference. He recalled that the UAR was the host of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference of 1958, that Cairo had the permanent secretariat of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, and also that UAR had participated in the First Games of New Emerging Forces (GANEFO) at Djakarta in November 1963.⁵⁷ Chou En-lai, however, observed complete silence on UAR's role in the first non-aligned conference. It was not that he had forgotten UAR's role in this matter but by observing silence on it Chou En-lai⁵⁸ indicated that he was disillusioned with the non-alignment.

After three meetings with President Nasser were over, Chou En-lai held a press conference on 20 December for one and half hour. He told the journalists that "a possibility" of holding a Second Afro-Asian Conference "existed". Both

57 GANEFO were organized by Indonesia in November 1963 after International Olympic Committee suspended Indonesia from the Olympic Games.

58 Deshpande, n. 20, p. 166.

Nasser and himself "agreed that good preparations for this conference must be made" because "only then" could it be successful. Also, it was agreed that "the ten principles of Bandung Conference" remained "worth fighting for".⁵⁹ It was clear even at this stage that Nasser was not in favour of fixing a date, not to speak of an early date. This should not be surprising because Nasser was attached to non-alignment and was in fact associated with the proposal to hold the second non-aligned conference.

Since the China-UAR joint-communique was to be issued on 21 December, Chou En-lai seized the opportunity of the press conference of 20 December to publicly put forward China's views on the Afro-Asian Solidarity and the Second Afro-Asian Conference. He said the Second Afro-Asian Conference could work for resolving the problems common to Afro-Asian countries. The common problems were:

To combat imperialism and old and new colonialism; to oppose aggression and intervention; to demand the withdrawal of foreign troops and removal of foreign military bases; to support the national liberation movements; to defend world peace; and to live in friendship in accordance with the (five) principles (of peaceful co-existence).... 60

Then he suggested that two methods be adopted to achieve Afro-

59 Report of the Press Conference in A.A. Solidarity, p. 18.

60 Ibid., p. 19.

Asian solidarity and to make the conference, a success. The first method was to seek common ground, to discuss the common problems and to take a common stand on them, while retaining differences and keeping bilateral and multilateral Afro-Asian disputes outside the conference deliberations. The second method was to settle the Afro-Asian disputes without imperial-
61
ist intervention.

It was at this press conference that Chou En-lai hinted for the first time that China would oppose the possible Soviet participation in the Second Afro-Asian Conference. He said:

The First Asian-African Conference was an important international conference held by the countries of Asia and Africa without the participation of the imperialist and colonialist countries. Japan was the only exception. Being a vanquished country under the occupation of foreign troops, Japan was also a country under foreign domination and went through the same trials as the other Asian and African countries. 62

Thus, in China's view, the qualification for the participation
63
in the conference "was essentially historical" or political and not only geographical. The country that wanted to participate in the conference "ought to have memories of foreign
64
domination and occupation by foreign troops". The hint that

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid., pp. 19-20.

63 Deshpande, n. 20, p. 169. Emphasis original.

64 Ibid.

China would like to keep Soviet Union out of the conference was given by Chou En-lai for the second time when he responded to a question put to him by a correspondent of Middle East News Agency. The question was, whether Chou En-lai would suggest any new meeting of Asian countries. Chou En-lai replied that China actively supported Prince Sihanouk's proposal of meeting of the Heads of Asian States. In fact, Prince Sihanouk's proposal was supported by China because "Prince Sihanouk had not included the Soviet Union in his proposed meeting...."⁶⁵

Chou En-lai reminded the journalists that the first non-aligned conference had "held high the banner of combating imperialism and old and new colonialism, supporting the national independence movement and defending world peace." He told them that he had a "belief" that the second non-aligned conference would also follow that line. And if it did not, it would "no longer be a conference of non-aligned countries."⁶⁶ In response to a question he added that "a true non-alignment policy" meant "non-participation in military bloc of an aggressive character in any form, and opposition to imperialist policies of aggression."⁶⁷ This was the second time that he made clear that China was not happy with the non-alignment which would not take anti-imperialist stand but would only

65 Ibid., p. 168.

66 A.A. Solidarity, p. 20.

67 Ibid. Emphasis added.

advocate the policy of keeping away from military pacts.

Chou En-lai was expressing doubts about the role of the forthcoming second non-aligned conference in anti-imperialist struggle but at the same time he was expressing confidence that the Second Afro-Asian Conference would play "an important role in the Asian and African countries' efforts to win and safeguard their national independence, strengthen their unity and cooperation, oppose imperialism and defend world peace."⁶⁸ But in spite of his show of disappointment with non-alignment and his preference to the Second Afro-Asian Conference, Chou En-lai failed to get Nasser's support for the proposal of the Second Afro-Asian Conference. China-UAR joint-communique issued on 21 December observed complete silence on this proposal.⁶⁹

Chou En-lai's visit to Algeria lasted for six days. He was given a rousing welcome and an opportunity to address the Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN) cadres.⁷⁰ The fact that "no visiting dignitary to Algeria had been allowed to do this before",⁷¹ showed the degree of warmth in Sino-Algerian relations. Therefore in Algeria, unlike in UAR, Chou En-lai could speak about the Second Afro-Asian Conference quite frankly. Speaking about the tasks of the conference in a press conference,

68 Ibid., pp. 34-35.

69 Text of the Communique in ibid., p. 56.

70 FLN was the party which fought for and won the Algerian independence.

71 Deshpande, n. 20, p. 179.

he said that the conference would:

- (1) render the ten principles of the first Afro-Asian conference more specific and
- (2) play still bigger role in the tasks of (a) accelerating the end of colonial rule, (b) of further liquidating the colonial forces in Asian and African countries and (c) of promoting economic co-operation among them. (Afro-Asian countries). 72

And thus he made clear that the Second Afro-Asian Conference had not to be just a repeat performance of the first conference but had to go ahead of it in the direction indicated by him.

The fact that Chou En-lai had publicly spoken about the need to convene the Second Afro-Asian Conference and had even talked about the proper tasks of the conference shows that he was very keen about the Algerian support for the conference proposal. The joint-communique said that "the two parties exchanged views fully...on international issues of common interest" which means the subject of the conference was broached by Chou En-lai. But though the communique recorded "identity of views on the questions discussed", it was silent on the question of the conference. ⁷³ The "identity of views" was thus less than complete and President Ben Bella refused to

72 Report of the Press Conference in A.A. Solidarity, p. 78. Emphasis added. The original paragraph has been split into these points by this writer.

73 Text of the Joint-Communique in ibid., p. 87. Emphasis added.

support the conference proposal.

This should not be surprising because the available evidence suggests that Ben Bella did hold different views from those of Chou En-lai. In his welcome speech on 21 December 1963, Ben Bella had told Chou En-lai that the Algerian Revolution was "ready to take an active and practical part in the efforts for international detente" and was "introducing a new dynamic into international relations" which was "a positive guarantee for our policy of promotion (of peace)."⁷⁴ Therefore, it must have been impossible for Ben Bella to support the conference proposal which was aimed at getting an endorsement to the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity, which was a rejection of the basic premises of detente.

In Morocco, Chou En-lai did not publicly speak about the Second Afro-Asian Conference as such, but he did speak about the Bandung Conference, about China's opposition to imperialism and about its support to national liberation wars and the principles of peaceful co-existence. He also stressed that it was "necessary to further strengthen" the Afro-Asian Solidarity.⁷⁵ But Hassan II, the King of Morocco, completely ignored these subjects in his speech. Consequently, China-Morocco joint-communicue stated only that the creation of the

74 Text of the speech in ibid., p. 83. Emphasis added.

75 See his Banquet speech in ibid., p. 97.

Organization of African Unity (OAU)⁷⁶ fell within the framework of the Bandung Principles and observed silence on the question of the Second Afro-Asian Conference.⁷⁷

Chou En-lai had a tough time with Habib Bourguiba, the President of Tunisia. In the banquet speech of 9 January 1964, Chou En-lai had told Bourguiba that the Afro-Asians were facing the tasks of fighting imperialism, old and new colonialism and for winning and upholding of national independence. He categorically stated that "the further strengthening of Afro-Asian Solidarity" was an "important condition for the victory of this struggle."⁷⁸ Bourguiba, in his speech, not only ignored these subjects but told Chou En-lai that Sino-Tunisian friendship did not mean that Tunisia had agreed with China's views on international politics. "Some of those" views, he said, he "must tell in the frankness of friendship", could not but arouse questions in his mind - "whether it is a question of the United Nations Organization, resort to force to settle frontier problems, or the Moscow agreement which is regarded by the great majority of the peoples as a promise and

76 The OAU is an organization which aims at achieving the African unity. For the charter of the organization see, The organization of African Unity, The Provisional Secretariat, Organization of African Unity: Basic Documents and Resolutions (Addis Abbaba, n.d.), pp. 7-13.

77 Text of the Joint-Communique in A.A. Solidarity, p. 104.

78 Text of Chou En-lai's Speech in ibid., p. 110.

hope."⁷⁹ Thus, he disapproved of China's views of the UN, blamed China for the Sino-Indian border war and also disagreed with China on the nature of the Partial Test Ban Treaty.

President Bourguiba did not stop there. He lectured Chou En-lai on China's responsibilities in international affairs. He said China could do much to strengthen peace and friendship between the peoples, "more so in Southeast Asia." Thus blaming China for war in South East Asia he proceeded to add that he was sure that "as fast as China attained progress in the building of a new society" it would consider international problems "without prejudice or complex."⁸⁰ It was quite natural on the part of a politician who held China and not US responsible for war in South East Asia to refuse to support the proposal of the Second Afro-Asian Conference.

Dr. Nkrumah, the President of Ghana, seemed to have been more interested in getting Chou En-lai's endorsement to the concept of Pan-Africanism rather than in anything else. Welcoming Chou En-lai, he said that the example of China:

should inspire us in Africa and leave no doubt in our minds that a continental union government of Africa is not only possible but (is) a reality. We are unalterably convinced that only a continental government of Africa can put an end to Africa's want and misery. A united Africa will be a strong link in the chain of Afro-Asian solidarity. 81

79 Text of President Bourguiba's Speech in ibid., p. 123.

80 Ibid., p. 124.

81 Dr. Nkrumah's Speech in ibid., p. 152. Emphasis added.

Thus for him Afro-Asian Solidarity meant Continental African Government's unity with the Asian States, against imperialism. However, Chou En-lai, by observing complete silence in his speech on the question of continental government indicated that he did not approve of the idea and also that he could not accept Nkrumah's assertion that a united Africa under a continental government could be a strong link in the chain of Afro-Asian Solidarity against imperialism. In his farewell speech, Chou En-lai said it was:

necessary for the African countries to promote unity and solidarity, intensify their co-operation, support each other, and develop together. In this way they will augment the moral and material strength of the African peoples, which will in turn facilitate the struggle against all forms of old and new colonialism.... 82

China-Ghana differences on the place of Nkrumah style African unity in the Afro-Asian Solidarity were reflected in the joint-communique. The communique tells us that both the statesmen agreed that "all anti-colonialist movements in the world should close their ranks and wage a united struggle against the forces of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism" but they seemed to have differed on what was to be done in the immediate future. Since Chou En-lai had frustrated Nkrumah's desire to get Chinese endorsement for the idea of a continental government of Africa, disappointed Nkrumah

82 Text of the farewell speech in ibid., p. 143.
Emphasis added.

put forward an entirely new proposal of "Afro-Asian-Latin American people's anti-imperialism conference", (During his public speeches he had not mentioned any such proposal) as more important than the Second Afro-Asian Conference. That was probably the reason why the joint-communique mentioned Nkrumah's proposal first and Chou En-lai agreed that it was "desirable and that possibilities for such a conference should be explored." It was "also considered that an Afro-Asian conference was necessary and that active preparations be undertaken to convene it."

The joint-communique further tells us that the two parties "discussed at length" the efforts of the African peoples to establish their unity. Chou En-lai had indicated earlier that he did not regard Pan-Africanism as a component of the Afro-Asian Solidarity against imperialism. Consequently, even after the lengthy discussions, the joint communique could record that the Chinese side expressed its support for the efforts of the African countries and peoples to "promote African unity and solidarity aimed at defending their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence" but not for the efforts aimed at establishing continental government. The Chinese side also "appreciated the Ghanaian leaders active efforts to achieve liberation and unity in Africa."

83 Text of China-Ghana Joint-Communique in ibid., p. 160.

84 Ibid., p. 162.

Why was Chou En-lai unenthusiastic about the proposal of tri-continental anti-imperialist conference? Dr. G.P. Deshpande has pointed out that:

- (1) It would appear that Chinese leader never really thought in terms of a tri-continental conference. At any rate, that was not on his agenda during this tour....
- (2) He was thinking this time in terms of an another Bandung. He was putting across the idea of an another Bandung as an anti-thesis to the another Belgrade. It was important therefore the conference he had in mind should have an historical status. A tri-continental conference would have meant that the Bandung Conference itself needed to be expanded.... this would have probably defeated the whole purpose of an another Bandung. It is unlikely that the Chinese at this time would have liked the idea of an another Bandung to be so overshadowed by a tri-continental conference. 85

Therefore Chou En-lai and Nkrumah differed widely. The joint-communique rightly mentioned that there was "a community of views", not the "identity of views".

Chou En-lai's diplomacy in Mali, Guinea, and Sudan was relatively more successful. All these countries supported the proposal of the Second Afro-Asian Conference. Sino-Mali joint-communique said that "the two countries endorse the idea of a second conference of the independent countries of Asia and Africa" and they were "determined to work for its success".⁸⁶ China and Guinea achieved an "extensive identity" of views and

85 Deshpande, n. 20, pp. 193-94.

86 Text of the Sino-Mali Joint-Communique in A.A. Solidarity, p. 164.

agreed that the conditions were "ripe for the convocation of a second Asian-African Conference."⁸⁷ Sudan also agreed with China that the "time was ripe for the convening of a second Asian-African Conference and that active preparations should⁸⁸ be made for it".

Chou En-lai's experience with the Ethiopian Emperor was similar to his experience with the Tunisian President. According to the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, there were two basic problems in world politics. The first problem was of raising the standards of living and the second problem was of preserving peace. The problems of liberation and anti-imperialist struggle did not exist for him. Therefore, he told Chou En-lai that "Ethiopia had eagerly associated itself with the limited test ban treaty" and that he was convinced that the treaty constituted "a major step in the direction of complete disarmament".⁸⁹ He went on to say that he was "distressed" by China's refusal to sign the treaty and also added that Ethiopia's policy of giving unstinting support to the UN and renouncing territorial ambitions held good for China also. He drew Chou En-lai's attention to China's 'responsibilities' in these matters and "asked" him to "give full weight to the words

87 Text of the Joint-Communique in ibid., pp. 219-23.

88 Text of the Joint-Communique in ibid., p. 242.

89 Text of the Speech in ibid., p. 254.

which we have spoken".⁹⁰ But Chou En-lai must have consoled himself a little, because in spite of the emperor's severe criticism of China's views of disarmament and UN, its position in the Sino-Indian border dispute, the emperor agreed with him that the time was ripe for convening the Second Afro-Asian Conference.⁹¹ During his visit to Somalia, Chou En-lai achieved a "complete identity" of views with the leaders of Somalia and they agreed that the "time was ripe for convening" the Second Afro-Asian Conference.⁹²

The foregoing shows that Chou En-lai's 53 days' African Safari was not very successful. Out of the ten countries that he visited, only six - Ghana, Mali, Guinea, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia - supported the proposal of the Second Afro-Asian Conference. It has been pointed out how Ghana attached only secondary importance to the Second Afro-Asian Conference and how Ethiopia supported the conference but criticized the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity completely. Out of the six countries that supported the conference proposal, only three - Mali, Guinea and Somalia - agreed with China to an extent on major issues in international politics.

V

Given the fact that the African support to the Chinese

90 Ibid., pp. 255-56.

91 Text of the Joint-Communique in ibid., p. 259.

92 Text of China-Somalia Joint-Communique in ibid., p. 302.

concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity was meager, China had to muster support from other directions. Chou En-lai's choice then fell on three of the sponsors of the First Afro-Asian Conference - Burma, Pakistan and Ceylon. Within nine days after his African Safari he undertook a trip to these countries.

Chou En-lai first went to Burma. In his banquet speech on 14 February 1964 he referred to the ten Bandung Principles. He told Chairman Ne Win that he had seen during his African Safari that "raging flames against imperialism and colonialism" were sweeping Africa. The new emerging countries of Africa and Asia had a common task of "continuing the fight against imperialism and old and new colonialism" and in order to carry out that fight, it was "necessary to hold still higher" the banner of Afro-Asian Solidarity.⁹³ Ne Win's response was not encouraging. In his reply speech he did not utter a single word on the major issues in international politics but confined himself strictly to the Sino-Burmese bilateral relations. Though before issuing the joint communique, Chou En-lai and Ne Win "reviewed the development of international situation", only Chou En-lai reaffirmed China's support to Burma's policy of "peace and neutrality" which in China's view, had contributed to the promotion of Afro-Asian Solidarity.⁹⁴ Ne Win was silent on the question of Afro-Asian Solidarity and the

93 Text of the Speech in ibid., p. 311.

94 Text of China-Burma Joint-Communique in ibid., p. 320.

communiqué did not mention the Second Afro-Asian Conference proposal at all. Burma's refusal to support the proposal even after four days of Chou En-lai's efforts was understandable since Burma, like UAR, had always associated itself eagerly with the non-alignment.

In Pakistan, unlike in Burma, Chou En-lai publicly spoke about the conference proposal and Afro-Asian "unity against imperialism", right at the time of reception on 18 February and again in his banquet speech on 20 February. Given the fact that Pakistan was not a non-aligned country and also because Sino-Pakistan friendship was growing after the conclusion of Sino-Pak border agreement in March 1963, it was quite natural that President Ayub Khan supported the proposal.⁹⁵ Z.A. Bhutto, then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, went so far as to say that China's presence in the Second Afro-Asian Conference would promote the cause of peace.⁹⁶ However, that did not mean that Pakistan endorsed the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity. Pakistan supported the proposal not because it thought the Second Afro-Asian Conference would strengthen the Afro-Asian Solidarity against imperialism but because it thought the conference "could make a valuable contribution to the prevention of aggression, the striving for world peace and the development of friendly cooperation among the Asian-African

95 President Ayub Khan's Banquet Speech in *ibid.*, p. 364.

96 Text of Bhutto's Speech in *ibid.*, p. 369.

countries." ⁹⁷ This was quite natural on the part of a member of the SEATO and the CENTO.

In Ceylon, Soong Ching Ling, Vice Chairman of China who accompanied Chou En-lai on his visit, attacked Soviet Union in her speech (something that was not done by Chinese leaders during the African Safari). Speaking at Sri Palee Institute, Ceylon, without naming the Soviet Union, she said:

...There are those...(who) would have us believe that colonialism and imperialism are already finished...that there is no need to be vigilant against still dangerous enemy, that they have but to wait for a better day to be handed on a silver platter to them; meantime there is no need for struggle and they can peacefully co-exist with their oppressors. The enemy is now pictured as 'wise', 'understanding' and 'peaceful'. These persons deplore action by the masses as 'rashness' and would settle all the world's problems via the private 'hotline' between several heads of states, regardless of what the earth's population might consider appropriate solution.... They are willing to accomodate the imperialists to reach agreements at the risk of others' sovereignty and security, to treat brothers as enemies and enemies as brothers. 98

This harsh speaking having been done by Soong Ching Ling on 28 February 1964, Chou En-lai spoke about the Afro-Asian Conference addressing a mass rally in Colombo on the same day. He reminded the audience that Ceylon was one of the sponsors of and participants in the First Afro-Asian Conference. He

97 China-Pakistan Joint-Communique in ibid., p. 371.

98 Text of the Speech in ibid., p. 383.

told them that it was "acknowledged by a good number of Asian and African countries that the time was ripe for the convening of the Second Asian-African Conference and that active preparations should be undertaken for this purpose."⁹⁹ Clearly, all this was meant for the attention of the Ceylonese Government also. But it failed to convince the Ceylonese leaders of the urgency of convening the Second Afro-Asian Conference. The reasons must be (1) that Ceylon attached primary importance to the Second non-aligned conference; and (2) as pointed out earlier, Ceylon had in fact associated itself with the proposal to convene the Second non-aligned conference.¹⁰⁰ The Prime Minister of Ceylon therefore "explained to the Chinese prime minister Ceylon's active interest in the holding of a second non-aligned conference".¹⁰¹ As far as the Second Afro-Asian Conference was concerned, Ceylon supported the proposal of the conference, agreed that "such a conference would serve a useful purpose" and "indicated" only that "Ceylon would participate in such a conference."¹⁰² There was nothing in the joint communique about the necessity to undertake active preparations nor was there anything about the need to strengthen Afro-Asian Solidarity against imperialism. Ceylonese unenthusiasm about the Second Afro-Asian Conference compared to its "active

99 Text of Chou En-lai's Speech in ibid., pp. 398-99.

100 See p. 82.

101 China-Ceylon Joint-Communique in A.A. Solidarity, p. 420.

102 Ibid., p. 421.

interest" in the second non-aligned conference could have hardly pleased Chou En-lai and Chen Yi (who had accompanied Chou En-lai on African and Asian Safari). Chen Yi must have kept in mind the nature of African and Asian support to Chinese concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity when he left for the preparatory meeting of the Second Afro-Asian Conference at Djakarta held from 10 to 15 April 1964.

Chapter IV

CHINA AND THE DJAKARTA PREPARATORY MEETING

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I

Indonesia had sent invitations for the preparatory meeting to twenty seven countries but only twenty two attended.¹ In the first meeting of the plenary session, Dr Subandrio, Foreign Minister of Indonesia, was unanimously elected the Chairman of the meeting. On 11 April the business of the meeting started after the inaugural speech by Sukarno.

In comparison to the First Afro-Asian Conference it would seem that the atmosphere in the preparatory meeting was favourable to China. Unlike in the First Afro-Asian Conference nobody criticized China in a direct or indirect fashion. Besides China now had two friends in South East Asia - Cambodia and Indonesia. In the First Afro-Asian Conference Cambodia had expressed fears about China and had demanded guarantees from China that it would act upon the five principles of peaceful coexistence.² By the time of Djakarta meeting however, Cambodia did not have any such fears from or doubts about Chinese adherence to the five principles of coexistence.

1 The countries invited were: Afghanistan, Algeria, Burma, Cambodia, Cameroon, Ceylon, China, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Senegal, Syria, Tanganyika, Turkey and the UAR. The countries which absented from the meeting were: Burma, Ivory Coast, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal.

2 See chapter II, p. 38.

It was the US that became the target of Cambodian delegate's criticism. He stressed that the problems faced by the Asian countries were a legacy of "Western Imperialism" and these problems would not have become acute if it had not been for "the intervention of imperialism and colonialism from outside Asia." He told the meeting that the imperialism and neo-colonialism had taken on particularly dangerous forms in the post-1954 period. These forms ranged from "direct armed intervention to economic domination through the intermediary of poisonous foreign aid, the buying up of consciences, the establishment of military, air and naval bases, the setting up of so-called security blocs, and so on."³ He wanted to draw the attention of the meeting especially to the fact, that Cambodia was being subjected to threats, pressures and aggression from the "imperialists and their agents."⁴

The Cambodian delegate reiterated and then explained the Cambodian demand for urgently convening the Second Geneva Conference on Indo-China. He said that the First Geneva Conference had aimed at achieving peace in Indo-China but there was no peace. The war in Indo-China after 1954 was the direct result of violation of the Geneva Agreements of 1954. The

3 Text of the Cambodian Delegate's Statement in, The Conference Secretariat, Meeting of Ministers in Preparation for the Second African-Asian Conference (Djakarta, 1964), p. 66. Cited hereinafter as Meeting of Ministers.

4 Ibid.

encroachment on Cambodian territory and the hostility of South Vietnam towards Cambodia were the "result of American domination in South Vietnam", and the expansionist policy of South Vietnam and Thailand "would not have been possible but for the approval and support of the United States."⁵ The land and air attacks on Cambodian frontier villages could be perpetrated only "thanks to mass deliveries of American war material" to South Vietnam and Thailand, and the US responsibility in that matter had been established.⁶ Cambodia had been able to resist the pressure from the US due to the fact that Cambodians were united in their resistance to such pressures, and Thailand and South Vietnam had not destroyed Cambodia because they "feared the intervention of our great friend, the People's

5 Ibid., p. 67.

6 Ibid. Bernard K. Gorton, Research Professor of International Relations at the George Washington University, writes: "One of the most serious aggravations between the two countries (South Vietnam and Cambodia) of course, is Prince Sihanouk's constant complaint that the South Vietnamese army...crosses into Cambodian territory and on occasion destroys property and kills Cambodians. This is no doubt true." (His article, "Cambodia: Where Foreign Policy Counts" in Asian Survey, Berkeley, vol. 5, p. 438, Emphasis added). The US ambassador to Cambodia at that time tried to convince Sihanouk that US was not in a position to influence South Vietnam. The fact was, not only that US was giving weapons to South Vietnam but that it never wanted to restrain or influence South Vietnam in this respect because, in the words of US "National Security Action Memorandum no. 288" dated 17 March 1964, the US policy was "to prepare immediately to be in a position on 72 hours notice to initiate full range of Laotian and Cambodian Border Control actions...." (Text of the memorandum in New York Times, Pentagon Papers, New York,

Republic of China."⁷

The Cambodian delegate repeated the charge that Cambodian efforts to get the Cambodian neutrality and the frontiers recognized internationally, and the demand for convening the Second Geneva Conference for this purpose were also resisted by US, Great Britain and "the three Asian powers that are in their service."⁸ Even the holding of talks with Thailand and South Vietnam had become impossible because of US pressure on them. Therefore, the delegate argued that the Second Afro-Asian Conference should have "as its essential task, that of giving full meaning and effectiveness to the Asian-African solidarity which...can only be effective after imperialism and

1971, p. 284. Emphasis added). When the US was preparing its own forces to commit aggression on Cambodia it could have hardly desired to restrain South Vietnam.

7 Cambodian Delegates Statement, n. 3, p. 68.

8 Ibid. This too was not a false charge. The US was opposed to the neutrality of Cambodia as well as possible neutralization of South Vietnam. Robert McNamara, the US Secretary of Defense reported to President Johnson that during his visit to South Vietnam in December 1963, he found that South Vietnamese Government was "strongly opposed" to the idea of neutralization. The US policy of opposition to neutralization was "somewhat suspect because of editorials by the New York Times and mention (of neutralization) by Walter Lippmann and others." Therefore, Robert McNamara "assured them (South Vietnam) as strongly as possible on this - and in somewhat general terms on the neutralization of Cambodia...." That means that Dullesism which regarded neutrality as immoral survived Dulles. For the text of the report see "Pentagon Papers", pp. 273-74. Cited in footnote no. 6.

neo-colonialism have disappeared in all their manifestations." ⁹
 He thus linked the task of achieving Afro-Asian Solidarity with the fight against old and new imperialism.

Sardar Swaran Singh, the delegate of India, made his statement after the Cambodian delegate. In his statement he reviewed the "memorable developments" since the First Afro-Asian Conference. Two such developments were the union of West Irian with Indonesia and of Goa with India. He recalled "with gratification" New Delhi Conference for the Independence of Indonesia in 1949 and the Bandung Conference's support for the independence of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. He then welcomed the newly independent African countries represented in the meeting, wished success to the OAU and reiterated India's support to the Declaration of Arab Summit of January 1964.

Swaran Singh declared that colonialism still continued to blemish Asia and Africa. The speech, however, was notable for its special attention to African achievements and problems and for silence on Asian problems. Throughout the statement he condemned "colonialism in Africa" but there was not a word about imperialism in Asia. He proposed that the forthcoming Second Afro-Asian Conference support the provisional government of Angola. He expressed happiness because Malawi and Northern Rhodesia were to be independent soon and he also

9 Cambodian Delegates Statement, n. 3, p. 68

condemned the South Africa's policy of racial discrimination. He had nothing to say about Asian affairs. The concern for the problem of war in Indo-China and the desire to dissuade Cambodia from joining SEATO were main reasons for India's participation in Bogor and the Bandung Conferences. But though the problem of war in Indo-China was more acute in 1964 than in 1954-55, Swaran Singh had nothing to say about it. He did not support Cambodia's demand for the Second Geneva Conference nor did he condemn imperialism in South East Asia.

Swaran Singh went on to say that the world had "made some progress in the desired direction" of disarmament. The international community had gone "beyond the sterile discussions of small groups representing two power blocs" as UN had "entrusted the task of negotiating a treaty on General and Complete disarmament to a committee of eighteen members". He also noted that the Partial Test Ban Treaty had been signed by more than a hundred nations, thus "ridding the present and future generations of fatal contamination."¹⁰ He asserted that though the progress in disarmament was "noteworthy", much remained to be done and it was the "duty of African and Asian countries to continue to urge the international community, and to complete it (disarmament) quickly."¹¹ At this

10 Text of Swaran Singh's Statement in Meeting of Ministers, pp. 104, 105 and 107.

11 Ibid., p. 107.

stage of the statement, Swaran Singh proposed that the Soviet Union be invited to the Second Afro-Asian Conference as a full participant. The reasons given by him were:

- 1) A great part of the Soviet Union lies in the continent of Asia.
- 2) The Soviet Union is already a member of various African-Asian organizations at the people's level, such as the African-Asian Solidarity Organization, the African-Asian Film Festival, the African Asian Workers' Conference, the African-Asian Games and so on.
- 3) The Soviet Union will make a worthy contribution to all that we are striving for. The proposed expansion of our membership would make the Second African-Asian Conference the largest and the most unique gathering in history. 12

Swaran Singh also proposed that the Second Afro-Asian Conference be held on the "auspicious" occasion of the tenth anniversary of the First Afro-Asian Conference i.e. on 18 April 1965. Holding the conference on that date would, in addition to giving adequate time for preparation to ensure the greatest possible success, also avoid a period overcrowded with various conferences. He also opined that since Africa had made great and admirable strides in the struggle against colonialism, holding of the Conference in Africa would be a fitting tribute to African achievements, and would also demonstrate the urgency of liberating the areas still under colonialism and in eradicating the traces of racialism in

12 Ibid., p. 108. The original paragraph has been split into these points by this writer.

Africa.¹³ H. J. Amarsinghe, the delegate of Ceylon, fully supported India on the questions of composition time and place of the conference and also on the question of the tasks of the conference in respect of carrying forward the disarmament.¹⁴

Chen Yi, the delegate of China, made his statement on 11 April in the afternoon. Reviewing the political situation after the First Afro-Asian Conference, he said that "the new emerging Asian and African states "had scored remarkable successes in combating the "control, intervention, subversion and aggression by imperialism and old and new colonialism, consolidating national independence and safeguarding state sovereignty and developing national economy and culture."¹⁵ The Afro-Asian Solidarity against imperialism had been steadily strengthened and developed. The Summit Conference of Arab States held in January 1964 also had contributed to the development of Afro-Asian Solidarity. In Chen Yi's view the GANEFO demonstrated "the staunch united will of the new emerging forces of Asia, Africa and other continents."¹⁶

It is worth noting that unlike Swaran Singh, Chen Yi did not mention the OAU. His reference to the GANEFO as de-

13 Ibid., p. 109.

14 Amarsinghe's statement in, Meeting of Ministers, p. 78.

15 Chen Yi's statement in, Meeting of Ministers, p. 81.

16 Ibid., p. 82. Emphasis added.

monstrating the united will of the new emerging forces of Asia, Africa and other continents meant that the Soviet Union's participation in GANEFO did not make it an Afro-Asian state.

Chen Yi described the victories of Afro-Asian peoples as "great" but reminded the delegates that the tasks before the Afro-Asians were "still arduous." There were still some countries which were suffering from the havoc and tribulations of colonial rule, while those which had "already attained independence" were "still subjected to imperialist interference and threats." Reiterating one of the most important beliefs of the Chinese leadership, he said that "imperialism will not step down from the stage of history on its own accord". "Despite the continuous defeats" it had suffered, it was "still bestirring itself, trying by hook or crook to retain its colonial interests."¹⁷

Declaring China's support to the "just" struggles, Chen Yi said that "in harmony with Bandung spirit" or in harmony with Afro-Asian Solidarity:

We support the People of South Korea and South Vietnam in their just struggle to fight imperialist aggression, and to strive for national liberation and national reunification. We firmly support the Japanese People in their patriotic struggles. (18) We firmly support the Laotian

17 Ibid.

18 This was a reference to the efforts of Japan Socialist Party to oppose the revision of US-Japan Security Treaty. For the details of the Japan Socialist Party's policy

people in their struggle to oppose foreign intervention, (19) and persist in a road of peace and neutrality. We firmly support the people of North Kalimantan (North Borneo) in their struggle to win national independence, and the just stand of Indonesian Government and people on this question. (20) The Chinese Government and People have always firmly supported the struggle of the Cambodian People to uphold their national independence and defend their state sovereignty and territorial integrity. At present the Kingdom of Cambodia is still facing the serious threats of United States intervention, subversion and aggression. I call on the African-Asian countries to support the just demand of the Cambodian Government for convening the Geneva Conference to guarantee the independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Cambodia. (21)

Coming to the African continent in his speech, he said in one sentence that China resolutely supported "the people of Angola, Mozambique, Portuguese Guinea, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Gambia, Nyasaland, Basutoland, Swaziland, Bechuanaland, South West Africa

see Yuki Tsurusaki, "A Short History of the Japan Socialist Party (II)", Japan Socialist Review (Tokyo), no. 55, 1 February 1964, pp. 24-48.

- 19 This was a reference to US intervention in Laotian affairs and its opposition to the neutrality of Laos. For the details of US intervention see Arthur J. Dommen, Conflict in Laos: The Politics of Neutralization (London, 1964), pp. 85, 154-56, 165, 188-92, 212, 216, 217, 238, 249-51.
- 20 A revolt in opposition to scheme of formation of Malaysia was led by A.M. Azahari from December 1962. The aim of his Party Rakyat was to oppose the formation of Malaysia and to form a unitary state of North Borneo, Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak. The Indonesian stand by 1964 on the question of formation of Malaysia was that the question be decided by Indonesia, Union of Malaya and the Philippines, through negotiations.
- 21 Chen Yi's Statement, n. 15, pp. 82-83.

and French Somalia." In another sentence, he extended support to the South African people's struggle against racism and for national independence and also to the Arab countries' struggle for Palestine.²² It is interesting to note that while he devoted a lengthy paragraph in his speech for South East and East Asian affairs and mentioned each case of opposition to imperialism there, he had only two sentences to say on the entire African continent. This rather detailed attention to South East and East Asia compared to a summary treatment of Africa shows Chinese preoccupation with US intervention in South East and East Asia.

Chen Yi said that the imperialism and old and new colonialism were the sources of war and "failing to oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war", there could be "no talk about the defence of world peace." The imperialists headed by the US were carrying an all-out arms expansion, stepping up preparations for a nuclear war and practising nuclear monopoly and blackmail. "Therefore", he declared, that the Chinese Government and People would "continue to work for a lasting world peace, the realization of general disarmament and the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons."²³

Chen Yi urged the preparatory meeting that the Second

22 Ibid., p. 83.

23 Ibid., pp. 83-84. Emphasis added.

Afro-Asian Conference should have five tasks before it. The Second Afro-Asian Conference "needed" to:

1. Further strengthen our unity and cooperation, and adopt concrete measures to support the Asian and African peoples who are still under colonial rule, in their struggles for national independence.
2. Further strengthen our unity and cooperation in order to oppose outside interference, safeguard state sovereignty and consolidate national independence.
3. Carry out economic, cultural and technical cooperation on the (basis of the) principles of equality, mutual benefit and non-interference in each others internal affairs, and without imposing any political conditions and privileges, and gradually develop an independent national economy and take the road of regeneration through self-reliance.
4. Strengthen our friendly cooperation in international affairs on the basis of the Ten Principles of the Bandung Conference and strive for our rightful position in international organizations.
5. Further strengthen our unity and cooperation in order to oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war, and to defend world peace. 24

He expressed his belief that the Second Afro-Asian Conference would provide an opportunity for a "full discussion" of these questions and would yield good results, giving "more concrete" expression to the Ten Bandung Principles and giving "greater play to the Bandung Spirit."²⁵

In the concluding part of the statement Chen Yi reiterated China's position on the methods to be followed in the

24 Ibid., p. 84.

25 Ibid., p. 85.

conference and also proposed that the disputes between Afro-Asian countries be kept out of the conference deliberations because they were bound to be settled sooner or later through friendly consultations and by excluding imperialist intervention. He described the "imperialism and old and new colonialism" as the "arch enemy" of the Afro-Asians and argued that the Afro-Asians had every reason to unite.²⁶ On the question of composition, time and place of the Conference, he said, he would make known his views later.

The Indonesian delegate Ali Sastroamidjojo said that it was "a fact" that in most Afro-Asian countries "imperialism and colonialism" had been weakened. He had "no doubt" that colonialism was "in full retreat", but he felt that the "outright repressive policies practised by colonial powers in certain territories" gave "reason to believe" that colonialism was still alive. Colonialism in Asia and Africa was "creating favourable conditions for neocolonialism to thrive".²⁷ Neocolonialism had given rise to "frontier problems, and those of an ethnic nature, causing grave quarrels amongst African-Asian Nations, obstructing their programmes of economic development and national reconstruction." According to him, the Second Afro-Asian Conference was necessary to decide upon a common approach of Afro-Asian countries to these problems and

26 Ibid., p. 86.

27 Ali Sastroamidjojo's Statement in, Meeting of Ministers, p. 111.

to "exchange news of experiences gained" in the post-Bandung
²⁸
 period.

Compared to Chen Yi's statement the tone of Sastroamidjojo's statement was very mild and it was clear that he was not prepared to name US as a neo-colonial or imperialist power. Again, unlike Chen Yi, Sastroamidjojo noted that "a certain degree of detente amongst formerly hostile nations" was "per-
²⁹
 ceivable". He did not accept the Chinese view that the US-Soviet detente was not in the interest of the third world countries. But he had a fear that underneath the apparent quietness of detente "something more dangerous could erupt which would give...cause for greater concern." "Therefore", he argued, that it was necessary to work deliberately towards "maintaining and consolidating such conditions of peace and
³⁰
 order." In other words, the Second Afro-Asian Conference had to work to develop the situation created by the detente. This view was closer to Swaran Singh's position than to Chen Yi's. About the timing of the conference he said that it was long
³¹
 overdue and should be held as soon as possible.

II

Like the second, the third meeting of the plenary

28 Ibid., pp. 111-12.

29 Ibid., p. 112.

30 Ibid., p. 113.

31 Ibid.

session was also marked by general statements. In the fourth meeting, since many delegates had wanted clarifications from India on its position about invitation to the Soviet Union, the Chairman of the meeting invited India to make a statement. Swaran Singh said that the proposal to invite the Soviet Union was motivated by various important considerations. He added some arguments to those which he had given in his general statement. He argued:

1. Principally, we must ensure that the views of a large and important part of Asia do not go unrepresented in our deliberations. Many of our countries have an affinity and kinship with the large neighbouring Asian parts of the Soviet Union, which we must continue to foster. In this regard we must bear in mind the fact that many aspects of the culture and civilization of Central Asia, situated within the confines of the Soviet Union, have influenced the culture and civilization of many countries in South and West Asia.
2. ...when the first Asian Relations Conference met in New Delhi in March 1947, representatives from practically all countries of Asia, including the Soviet Republics of Central Asia came to that conference to consider the common problem which all Asian countries had to face....
3. The participation of the Soviet Union in Asian and Afro-Asian affairs has not merely been a formal one. It is wellknown that the Soviet Union has throughout fully demonstrated its keen interest and concern in the problems and tribulations of Afro-Asian countries. It has played a notable role in assisting the freedom movements in Asia and Africa.

One has only to recall the determined stand taken by the USSR against the tripartite aggression against the United Arab Republic in 1956 and during the Suez crisis, and its resolute support for Algerian independence, to appreciate

the magnitude of the debt of gratitude which we owe to this great country. It is therefore, fitting and important that the Soviet Union should take its place among us and continue as one of us, to assist in the preservation and promotion of the vital interests of the Afro-Asian world.

4. One may call...(the exclusion of the Soviet Union from the First Afro-Asian Conference) an unfortunate omission; and indeed, there were other unfortunate omissions too. This meeting... will rectify these omissions. For example, Mongolia as well as North Korea and South Korea were not invited to the Bandung Conference: they should be invited now....
5. Apart from these omissions ...there was in 1955, what we may call an act of commission which we consider objectionable today, namely the invitation to the Central African Federation, as is well known, though an African country, was dominated by a white minority government.... 32

The delegate of Ceylon promptly supported the Indian position on the subject in its entirety. The Chairman of the meeting intervened and pointed out that the question of who was to be invited was not to be discussed in this meeting, as that would be taken up later on and that he had only invited the Indian delegate to clarify India's position. It seems Chen Yi was not yet prepared to give counterargument at this stage, therefore he agreed with the Chairman that the matter be discussed later on, but "since there were rumors that China supported the idea of the Soviet Union being invited", he informed the meeting that China did not agree to the proposal because the Soviet Union was "a European country, not an Asian

33
country."

The Chairman's intervention notwithstanding, the discussion on the question of Soviet participation continued for the major part of the fourth meeting. Though Chen Yi did not give any more arguments in support of his stand, Guinea gave some arguments opposing Soviet participation. These arguments were picked up by Chen Yi and used later on. The delegate of Guinea, stressing that Guinea had excellent relations with the Soviet Union, said, the Soviet Union was "nevertheless a European country". "If the Soviet Union was to be regarded as an Asian country because a part of the Soviet Union lay in Asia", the same might be said of "the U.S.A. with Hawaii, Puerto Rico" etc. in Asia. "The Soviet Union stretched from Poland to Siberia but politically it was a single entity, and the capital of the Soviet Union, Moscow, was in Europe." He also mentioned in this connection that the African countries had opposed the French Community because "it would not form a single entity and the capital would be in Paris."³⁴ He gave an interesting reason for opposing Soviet Union's participation. He said, "there were tensions between the Soviet Union and China." These tensions had "arisen at A.A. Solidarity

33 "Summary Record of the Fourth Meeting of the Plenary Session" in Proceedings of the Meeting of Ministers in Preparation of the Second African-Asian Conference (Djakarta, n.d.), p. 26. Cited hereinafter as Proceedings of the Meeting of Ministers.

34 Ibid., p. 27.

meetings and had an influence upon A.A. Solidarity. This had been felt at the A.A. working conference that had been recently held in Algeria. This was a fundamental and dangerous point³⁵ and might be a cause for division" among Afro-Asian countries. Swaran Singh was offended by these arguments and said, he was "surprised that Guinea had implied a comparison between the Soviet Union and a colonial power (France)."³⁶ Guinean delegate denied that he had implied any such comparison. At this stage, both Indian and Ceylonese delegates demanded an immediate discussion on the question of Soviet participation; but the Chairman stuck to his earlier position because "certain delegates were not in a position to participate in the discussion"³⁷ right then.

The subject of the composition of the Second Afro-Asian Conference was taken up for discussion in the Seventh Meeting of the plenary session. In the Fourth Meeting, the delegate of Ghana had proposed that the meeting should first agree on

35 Ibid. The meeting referred here as "A.A. Solidarity Meetings" were organized by the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) which was founded in 1957. The permanent secretariat of AAPSO had called the meeting of the Council of AAPSO in Algiers from 22-27 March 1964 to consider the question of convening the fifth Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Conference. See Bruce D. Larkin, China and Africa 1949-1970 (London, 1971), pp. 85-86, 141. Also see Charles Neuhauser, Third World Politics: China and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, 1957-1967 (Cambridge, 1968).

36 Summary Record of the Fourth Meeting of the Plenary Session, n. 33, p. 28.

37 Ibid.

the criteria to be used as the basis for extending an invitation for the conference. In the Seventh Meeting he suggested two criteria: (i) All countries that had participated in the First Afro-Asian Conference should be invited, (ii) All countries in Africa and Asia that had achieved independence in the post-Bandung period should also be invited as full participating members. To these, Indian delegate added the third one saying that the representatives of national freedom movements should be invited. These three criteria were agreed upon by all the delegates. At this point of discussion Indonesian delegate opposed sending of invitation to Malaysia and proposed that the invitation be sent to the Government of North Kalimantan.³⁸

Chen Yi supported the three criteria. He proposed that the Republic of Mongolia and North Korea be invited and supported the Indonesian position on Malaysia and North Kalimantan. Then he gave Chinese arguments opposing the idea of the Soviet participation in the conference. They were:

1. There were eight autonomous Asian Republics in the Soviet Union but they were not sovereign states, independent from Moscow. The Soviet Union was a unified state. There was no reason to invite a European state just because it covered a large area of Asia.

38 "Summary Record of the Seventh Meeting of the Plenary Session" in, Proceedings of the Meeting of Ministers, pp. 34-35. The Government of the Unitary State of North Kalimantan was proclaimed on 8 December 1962 by Azahari to whom reference has been made in note 20. At the time of Djakarta meeting this government was in exile in Indonesia.

2. The (second) African-Asian Conference was to be a Conference of Heads of States and that required formal participation of the country concerned. It was therefore a different matter from peoples meetings such as a film festival, etc.
3. The Soviet Union was not a member of the A.A. bloc in the U.N. and no one had ever suggested that it should become a member.
4. The Soviet Union had not supported a very reasonable proposal made by the A.A. countries in the U.N. for increased representation of the A.A. countries in the leading bodies and agencies of that organization. And strangely enough, the Soviet Union had linked its rejection of this proposal with the question of China's membership of the U.N. There was no need to have linked these two questions. China had already made its stand clear on a number of occasions. It was quite willing to allow the overall interests of the A.A. countries to be considered first without placing its own personal interests in the way.
5. But even were the Soviet Union to change its attitude and support Africa-Asia on this, China would still not agree to that country being invited. A country cannot be invited just because it supports Africa-Asia or as a recognition of the debt owed to it. Such sentiments ought to be catered for on the other forums and not by inviting them to an African-Asian Conference. 39

Chen Yi claimed that China's stand had always been consistent on this question. It had not agreed to the Soviet Union being invited to the First Afro-Asian Conference though the Sino-Soviet relations were very good at that time. He said that the Sino-Soviet differences might continue for some time, but "even

were they to be solved and relations improve as a result,⁴⁰
China would still not agree to inviting" the Soviet Union.

In the Eighth Meeting, Chen Yi proposed that Mongolian People's Republic and the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea should be invited for the conference. The proposal was accepted unanimously. Swaran Singh proposed that South Korea, Kuwait, Cyprus and Western Somoa should be invited. China did not oppose the idea of inviting South Korea and the Indian proposal was accepted unanimously.⁴¹ Swaran Singh also proposed that Malaysia should be invited and Indonesian delegate urged that the Government of North Kalimantan should be invited,⁴² at least as an observer.

Record of the Djakarta meeting shows that in a discussion of nearly seven and half hours spread over three meetings of the plenary session, only Ceylon supported India on the question of invitation to the Soviet Union and only Guinea supported China in the latter's opposition to such invitation. Whereas Ceylon supported India on all questions discussed in the meeting, Guinea supported China only on the question of invitation to the Soviet Union. The Philippines' delegate gave an indirect support to China on this question by saying

40 Ibid., p. 36.

41 "Summary Record of the Eighth Meeting of the Plenary Session", in Proceedings of the Meeting of Ministers, p. 39.

42 Ibid., p. 41.

that "the criterion of membership in (sic) the Asian-African group at the United Nations or in (sic) any other recognized international forum, provided the country was an independent state, should be...adopted" as the basis for extending invitations.⁴³ Although Chen Yi went to give all out support to Indonesia on the question of opposition to Malaysia and invitation to the North Kalimantan Government in exile, Indonesian delegate observed silence throughout the meeting on the question of invitation to the Soviet Union. Same was true of Cambodia. China's another African friend, Algeria, also observed silence on this question. The delegates of Ethiopia, Morocco, Nepal, Turkey, the UAR and Syria were silent on this question, whereas Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tanganyika, Cameroon, and Ghana avoided expressing any opinion on the ground that they had to get instructions from their governments. Though Iran had an open mind on this question and was prepared to accept the decision either way, Iraq and Liberia suggested that the question be discussed in a subcommittee. On the question of inviting Malaysia, India was supported by Ceylon, Tanganyika, Cameroon, and Iran. Barring China and Indonesia no country positively opposed the Indian proposal. Indonesia withdrew its proposal of inviting North Kalimantan Government in the Ninth Meeting of the session.⁴⁴

43 Ibid., p. 40.

44 "Summary Record of the Ninth Meeting of the Plenary Session", Proceedings of the Meeting of Ministers, p. 44.

A sub-committee consisting of Afghanistan, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Morocco and Syria as members was asked to go into the question of inviting the Soviet Union and Malaysia. The decisions of the subcommittee were to be submitted to the meeting of the plenary session and finalized there. The countries wishing to express their views on this question were "to communicate directly with the subcommittee."⁴⁵ But no consensus could be achieved in the subcommittee as also in the final meeting of the plenary session. The Final Communique of the Djakarta meeting said the following on the question of inviting the Soviet Union:

Some delegations were of the view that the matter may be placed before the Heads of State/Government at the Second African-Asian Conference for their consideration. Some other delegations were against submitting this matter to the Heads of State/Government at the Second African Asian Conference for their consideration. Therefore no agreement was reached.⁴⁶

In the case of Malaysia, "it was hoped that the obstacles which prevented reaching a consensus on the invitation would be eliminated. In this case an invitation should be extended as soon as possible."⁴⁷

The question of the time and venue of the conference

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- 45 Summary Record of the Eighth Meeting of the Plenary Session, n. 41, p. 41.
- 46 Text of the Communique in, Proceedings of the Meeting of Ministers, p. 92.
- 47 Ibid.

were discussed in the Fifth Meeting of the plenary session. Algeria, like India, proposed that the conference should coincide with the tenth anniversary of the First Afro-Asian Conference and it should be held in Africa leaving the choice of the venue to the African countries. Since the second non-aligned conference was scheduled to be held in October 1964, China would have liked the convening of the Second Afro-Asian Conference before the second non-aligned conference. In the meeting, however, the Chinese delegate kept quiet on this question for two reasons. First, Pakistan, one of the few friends of China, suggested that the conference should be held at the end of February or in the beginning of March 1965 because there were presidential elections in Pakistan in February 1965.⁴⁸ Second, contrary to the press reports that Indonesia was very keen to have the Second Afro-Asian Conference held before the second non-aligned conference,⁴⁹ the Indonesian delegate did not appear to be in a hurry at all. In any case he did not seem to show the probable Chinese desire that the Afro-Asian Conference should meet before the non-aligned conference did. There, all that the Indonesian delegate said was that the Second Afro-Asian Conference "should be closely linked to the First (Afro-Asian) Conference and therefore he would also like to see that the significance of the 10th Anniversary

48 "Summary Record of the Fifth Meeting of the Plenary Session" in Proceedings of the Meeting of Ministers, p. 30.

49 The Hindu (Madras), 12 April 1964.

of the Bandung Conference would not be lost." ⁵⁰ Pressing for an early date would have isolated China completely. Therefore, when the delegate of Morocco proposed that the Conference should be held from 10 March 1965 China accepted the date along with others.

A fifteen member ambassadorial level Standing Committee was appointed by the meeting to make preparations for the conference. ⁵¹ The choice of the venue was left to the OAU. It was agreed that Asian-African Economic Conference should be held prior to the pre-summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The Economic Conference was to be organized by the Afro-Asian countries which were to participate in the UN Conference on World Trade and Development at Geneva in 1964 after the Geneva Conference was over. The recommendations of the Asian-African Economic Conference were not to be binding on Second Afro-Asian ⁵² Conference. China agreed to attend the conference. The ambassadorial level Standing Committee was to establish liaison with the UN World Trade and Development Conference and the

50 "Summary Record of the Fifth Meeting of the Plenary Session", n. 48, p. 31.

51 Of the fifteen thirteen countries were: Algeria, Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan, the UAR, Iran and Tanganyika. Two seats in the committee were reserved for the countries of Africa which might achieve independence before the Second Afro-Asian Conference was held.

52 "Summary Record of the Ninth Meeting of the Plenary Session", n. 44, pp. 45-46.

delegates attending that conference and to make the related materials available to the Asian-African Economic Conference. China agreed to this proposal also.

III

The outcome of the Djakarta meeting shows that China scored a success in blocking for the time being the entry of the Soviet Union in the proposed Second Afro-Asian Conference. This does not, however, mean that China was in a better position than India to influence the Afro-Asian opinion. China's success was due mainly to positions taken by Guinea and the Philippines. It seems India had not consulted the Soviet Union. Consequently, when the delegate of Afghanistan "wished to know if there was any source that might inform the Meeting of the views" of the Soviet Union, Indian delegate in the meeting was compelled to say that "he did not agree with the Afghan delegate that the opinion of country concerned should be ascertained."⁵³ China's success may also be partly attributed to the procedure followed in the meeting i.e. the procedure of taking all decisions by unanimity of views.

Chen Yi was no doubt delighted over the outcome of the meeting. In a statement issued on 17 April 1964 at Djakarta airport before leaving Indonesia, he stressed the point that the meeting was a success because the Indonesian principles of

53 "Summary Record of the Fourth Meeting of the Plenary Session", n. 33, pp. 26, 27.

Mushawarah (consultation) and Mufakat (unanimous agreement) had been put into practice and because these principles had become a "common code of conduct guiding the delegates" participating in the meeting.⁵⁴ He pointed out that throughout six days of meeting there was no voting and unanimous agreement was reached on all matters through consultation and that was "the key to success".⁵⁵ The statement described the Indian proposal of inviting the Soviet Union as "improper" because the Soviet Union was "not an African or Asian country" and claimed that, by "acting in the spirit of seeking common ground and leaving aside the differences and on the principle of reaching unanimity through consultation", the meeting had "negated this proposal...."⁵⁶

It was not as though China had questioned Soviet Union's Asianness for the first time in the Djakarta meeting. China had already done it 20 days before the Djakarta meeting, in the meeting of Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization (AAPSU) held in Algiers from 22-27 March 1964 without, however, directly naming the Soviet Union. The Chinese delegate had then argued that in the AAPSU "a certain outside force has opposed tooth and nail (the correct) line which has the firm support of the overwhelming majority of the Afro-Asian

54 Text of the Statement in SCMP, no. 3204, p. 41.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

peoples",⁵⁷ and "a certain outside force argues that the principal and central task of the new emerging countries consists purely in economic reconstruction."⁵⁸ B. Gafurov, the Soviet delegate at the meeting, later held a press conference in Moscow on 6 April 1964 in which he severely criticized China. But in this press conference attended by the Soviet as well as foreign journalists, B. Gafurov did not contradict the Chinese argument of the Soviet Union being an "outside force" in AAPS0, nor did he claim that the Soviet Union was an Asian country.⁵⁹

Soviet argument that the Soviet Union was an Asian country was given for the first time on 25 April 1964, that is, nearly a month after the Algiers meeting and 10 days after the Djakarta meeting. Pravda article written by "Observer" on 25 April 1964 said that every school-child knew that the Soviet Union was "not only a European but also an Asian country".⁶⁰ Carrying on this argument further, the Soviet Union pointed out that it accounted for forty per cent of the territory of

57 The Speech of the Chinese delegate in SCMP, no. 3188, p. 30. Emphasis added.

58 Ibid., p. 31. Emphasis added.

59 For the full report of the conference published in Pravda, see Current Digest of the Soviet Press (Michigan), vol. 16, no. 14, p. 24.

60 "Who Profits from the Isolation of the Peoples of Asia and Africa", Pravda article in Soviet News (Soviet Embassy in London), no. 4982, 29 April 1964, p. 65.

Asia, that the Asian part of the Soviet Union was almost twice as large as the territory of China, and that China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Burma and Japan could "fit in to the vast space of the Asian part of the U.S.S.R."⁶¹ The Soviet Union also accused that the Chinese Government was "bringing to the fore with increasing frequency a racial label which "was to "determine the community of political interests and the possibility of joint action in the international field." It also accused that the Chinese Government was cultivating an idea that "peoples whose skins are of different colour cannot understand one another and cannot go hand in hand, even if they have common goals and the same opponents."⁶²

In an answer to this criticism and accusation, the Chinese Government issued a statement wherein it argued that "in the international relations each state is a single entity and can have only one political centre, and it cannot be said that the Soviet Union has two political centres because its territory extends over Europe and Asia." It was all the more impossible to say that the "political centre of the Soviet Union is rather in Asia because the Asian part of the Soviet Union is bigger than the European part." China agreed with the Soviet statement that two-thirds of the Soviet territory lay

61 "Soviet Government's Statement to the Government of Afro-Asian Countries" in Soviet News, no. 4985, 5 May 1964, p. 81.

62 Ibid., p. 82.

in Asia, but in its view, more important fact was that "nearly three-fourths of the Soviet population live in Europe." Still more important fact was that "the political centre of the Soviet Union...has always been in Europe and...it has traditionally been acknowledged as a European country." And, "no matter how vast Soviet territory in Asia may be this cannot turn the Soviet Union into an Asian country."⁶³

In support of its view the Chinese Government statement quoted Nehru's statement of 30 December 1954 that the Soviet Asia was not invited to the First Afro-Asian Conference because it was a part of a European unit. The statement pointed out that the Soviet Union had supported the First Afro-Asian Conference but had not asked about its own participation in the conference. The statement also refuted the Soviet charges of racialism and reminded the Soviet Union that the Afro-Asian Solidarity "is not a racial concept."⁶⁴

The Pravda article of 25 April gave an impression that the Soviet Union preferred the second non-aligned conference to the Second Afro-Asian Conference. The article said that the Soviet Union supported the idea of convening the second non-aligned conference "on the grounds that this can facilitate a further consolidation of the forces of all who are really interested in peace and are striving for general and complete

63 Peking Review, vol. 7, no. 23, 5 June 1964, p. 7.

64 Ibid.

disarmament, and for the easing of international tensions...."⁶⁵

But the Soviet Union was not so sure about the Second Afro-Asian Conference's role in realization of these goals. Therefore Pravda wrote that "the Soviet Union will support the calling of the Second Conference of Afro-Asian countries, if the task of the conference is to unite all the forces fighting against imperialism, and against colonial slavery...."⁶⁶ The Soviet Government statement sent to Afro-Asian countries in August admitted that the Soviet Union had not taken an initiative in raising the question of its participation in the Second Afro-Asian Conference. It informed the Afro-Asian governments that "even when some friendly states were ascertaining the possibility of the Soviet Union's assent" to its participation in the conference, "the Soviet government by no means deemed such participation mandatory."⁶⁷ This was the state of affairs by August 1964.

65 Soviet News, n. 60, p. 66.

66 Ibid. Emphasis added.

67 For the text of the statement as published in Pravda on 14 August 1964, see Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 16, no. 33, p. 18. Emphasis added.

Chapter V

CHINA AND INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE

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The Economic Conference of the Afro-Asian countries was held in Geneva on 16-17 June 1964 in accordance with the Djakarta Meeting's decision.¹ In this conference the Chinese delegate stuck to the earlier Chinese views on the problems of economic development of the Afro-Asian countries.² The second non-aligned conference was held at Cairo from 5 to 10 October 1964, which followed the course chalked out earlier by the first non-aligned conference in 1961.³ The conference regretted the fact that the progress in disarmament had not been satisfactory and called upon "all states to accede" to the Partial Test Ban Treaty and to "abide by its provisions in the interests of peace and the welfare of humanity."⁴ Quite understandably, the Chinese press took a very passing note of the conference. Peking Review reported the world opinion on the conference but avoided to give its own detailed

1 For the joint communique of this conference see, Department of Foreign Affairs, Documents for the Second African-Asian Conference (Indonesia, n.d.), pp. 27-28.

2 Text of the Chinese delegate's speech in Peking Review, vol. 7, no. 26, 26 June 1964, pp. 8-10.

3 For the text of the Conference Declaration see Documents for the Second African-Asian Conference, n. 1, p. 16.

4 Ibid.

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comment.

The OAU, to which the choice of the venue of the Second Afro-Asian Conference was left by the Djakarta meeting, decided to have Algeria as a host country for the conference and naturally Algiers became the venue. In the January 1965 meeting of the Preparatory Committee, Algeria requested the Committee to postpone the conference because the arrangements for the conference could have been completed by Algeria only by May 1965. The Committee unanimously decided to postpone the conference for the first time. The February 1965 meeting of the Preparatory Committee decided to convene the conference from 29 June and to call the Foreign Ministers meeting on 24 June. As a member of the Committee China was a party to these decisions.

It has been pointed out earlier that the question of US intervention in East and South East Asia was of utmost importance in the thinking of Chinese foreign policy-makers even at the time of the Djakarta meeting. In the period that followed, China had added reasons to continue to attach increasing importance to the question of US intervention in South East Asia. The years 1963 and 1964 were the years of what Kahin and Lewis describe as the "Americanization of (Vietnam) War."⁶ Unlike

5 Peking Review, vol. 7, no. 43, 23 October 1964, pp. 14-15.

6 George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, The United States in Vietnam (New York, 1967), p. 151.

in 1962, the war was carried into the North Vietnamese territory in 1963-64. South Vietnamese commando teams had been engaged in sabotage missions inside North Vietnam "by air, sea and land"⁷ even before July 1963. From July 1963 South Vietnamese navy, with a protective cover by US destroyers, started bombarding the coastal areas of North Vietnam.⁸ In 1963-64 this bombardment and US military operations were categorized by US as "a modest covert program operated by South Vietnamese (and a few Chinese Nationalists)"⁹. But in 1965, the "modest covert program" became quite overt and US started open bombardment of North Vietnam and the war was openly escalated.

The escalation of Vietnam war was bound to affect Chinese attitude towards the Second Afro-Asian Conference and its tasks. In March 1965 Chou En-lai visited Algeria. As a result of Chou En-lai's talks with Ben Bella, Algeria condemned the US escalation of Vietnam war and supported the "just struggle of South Vietnamese people against U.S. imperialist aggression and for national liberation."¹⁰ Ben Bella and Chou En-lai expressed their belief that the Second Afro-Asian Conference was "of

7 Ibid., p. 156.

8 Ibid., p. 157.

9 "U.S. Objectives in South Vietnam" National Security Action Memorandum no. 288 dated 17 March 1964. Text in New York Times, Pentagon Papers (New York, 1971), p. 284.

10 Text of China-Algeria joint communique in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 15, 9 August 1965, p. 11.

special importance for the effective solidarity of the Afro-Asian countries (and) for the strengthening of common action against imperialism...."¹¹ and they pledged to do their best for the success of the conference.

In addition to getting Algeria's support on the Vietnam question, Chou En-lai seems to have been successful in some other respects. In February 1965, the reports coming from Cairo said that the Algerian Secretary-General of the Preparatory Committee had told the journalists that Algeria intended to invite the Secretary Generals of the UN, the OAU and the Arab League and also the President of the UN General Assembly. It was also reported that South Vietnam and South Korea would be invited for the conference.¹² But the press reports after Chou En-lai's visit to Algeria in March 1965, had nothing to say about invitations to the General Secretaries of the OAU and the Arab League. By 7 June it had become clear that Algeria had not invited South Vietnam and South Korea at all.¹³ Obviously, this was the result of Chou En-lai's persuasion during his visit for not inviting the South Vietnamese government, which was regarded by China as a US puppet and the South Korea as a pro-imperialist regime.

11 Ibid. Emphasis added.

12 Africa Diary, vol. 5, no. 18, 24-30 April 1965, p. 2300.

13 Ibid., no. 27, 26 June-2 July 1965, p. 2397.

In April 1965, Chou En-lai answered the questions put to him by the editor-in-chief of the Middle East New Agency. The questions were: What were the main reasons for the convocation of the Second Afro-Asian Conference? What were the results that Chou En-lai expected to come out of the conference? And what were the similarities and differences between the objectives of non-alignment and Afro-Asian Solidarity? Answering these questions, Chou En-lai said that in the "new circumstances" of increased US intervention in Afro-Asian affairs, it was necessary for Afro-Asian countries to "further strengthen their solidarity and to support and assist one another in their common struggle" against imperialism. That was to be "the main task of the Second Afro-Asian Conference." Chou En-lai avoided being critical of the non-alignment and said that "though" there were "different peculiarities between the endeavour of Afro-Asian Solidarity and the genuine non-alignment policy", they had common aims.

Teng Hsiao-ping addressed a mass rally on 18 April celebrating the tenth anniversary of the First Afro-Asian Conference. He said that the post-1955 decade had "further proved" that imperialism, "particularly U.S. imperialism" was the enemy of Afro-Asian peoples; and the Afro-Asians had the "common historical task of completely driving" it out from

14 Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 15, 9 April 1965, p. 10. Emphasis added.

15 Ibid. Emphasis added.

16 Ibid. Emphasis added.

Asia and Africa and creating a new Asia and Africa. He declared that the war in Vietnam was the challenge of US not only to the Vietnamese but also to all Afro-Asian people. He paid a glowing tribute to the Vietnamese for making a "great contribution to the anti-imperialist cause" of Afro-Asian and Latin American people. And lastly, he told his audience that peace loving people of Asia and Africa (and of course of China) were "looking forward to the opening of the Second African-Asian Conference" because, the conference would "carry forward the Bandung Spirit of unity against imperialism and advance¹⁷ the struggle of" the Afro-Asian people against imperialism.

In the beginning of June 1965 Chou En-lai visited Tanzania. On his way back he made stopovers at the capitals of Ethiopia, the UAR, Syria, and Pakistan and held talks with the officials of these governments. The most important issue from Chinese viewpoint i.e. the US escalation of Vietnam war and the tasks of the Second Afro-Asian Conference, must have been discussed by Chou En-lai; but no government except Tanzania, openly supported China on this question. China-Tanzania joint communique of 8 June "condemned the bombing of North Vietnam and the deliberate spread of war in Indo-China"¹⁸. The joint communique said that the two countries were "looking forward with

17 Text of the speech in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 17, 23 April 1965, p. 11. Emphasis added.

18 Text in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 24, 11 June 1965, p. 3.

confidence to the successful convening" of the Second Afro-African Conference. They were "convinced that the conference would certainly carry on and develop the Bandung Spirit", and would "continue to encourage the struggle against imperialism and old and new colonialism."¹⁹ They also expressed their determination to make "great efforts" for the complete success of the conference.

In a memorandum to Algeria on 1 June, the Central Committee of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF) asserted that the NLF was "the sole and genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people and not the Saigon authorities." Therefore, it claimed that only the NLF was "qualified to re-²⁰present South Vietnam" at the Second Afro-Asian Conference. China supported the NLF stand on 20 June.²¹ Peoples Daily editorial pointed out that within 18 months 12 coup d'etats had taken place in Saigon and the Saigon government had become a mere plaything of the US. Therefore, it argued that the Saigon government could not represent anybody, still less could

19 Ibid. Emphasis added.

20 The Memorandum quoted in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 26, 25 June 1965, p. 11. The National Liberation Front (NLF) was organized by the South Vietnamese communists sometime in 1958 to fight against the Diem regime and US intervention in South Vietnam. North Vietnam recognized NLF only in 1960. For some interesting details see, Kahin and Lewis, n. 6, p. 156.

21 Peoples Daily, editorial of 20 June. Abridged text in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 26, 25 June 1965, p. 10.

it represent South Vietnam in the Second Afro-Asian Conference.²²
 A claim similar to that of NLF was also made by Prince Souphanouvong, the Chairman of the Neo Lao Hak Sat (NLHS) and the Vice-Prime Minister of the Laotian Tripartite Union Government (LTUG) established in 1962.²³ In a memorandum addressed to the Foreign Ministers Meeting of the Afro-Asian Conference on 19 June, he contended that Prince Souvanna Phouma's government which excluded the NLHS had no right to speak on behalf of the Laotian people²⁴ in the Afro-Asian Conference. Peoples Daily commentator in his article on 23 June declared China's support to Souphanouvong's stand.²⁵ With a view to get support from UAR on all these important positions of China on various questions, Chou En-lai undertook a three days visit to UAR and

22 Ibid.

23 NLHS was a front-organization dominated by the Laotian Communists - Pathet Lao. LTUG was established by the Geneva Conference of 1962 on Laos. According to the Geneva Agreements the US, Soviet Union, and China had undertaken not to interfere in the internal affairs of Laos. In Laos, a union government having a centrist Prime Minister and two Vice Prime Ministers - one leftist and one rightist - was established. Prince Souvanna Phouma was a centrist, Prince Souphanouvong was a leftist and General Nosavan was a rightist. The unity, integrity and neutrality of Laos was recognized by the conference. However the US interference in Laotian affairs continued. In April 1964, with the US help, rightists staged a coup and ousted the leftists from the government. In May US F-100 jet fighters started bombing Pathet Lao controlled areas of Laos. For details see Authur J. Dommen, Conflict in Laos: Politics of Neutralization (London, 1964), pp. 223-64.

24 quoted in Peking Review, n. 21, p. 11.

25 Abridged text of the article in ibid.

reached Cairo on 19 June. The visit was bound to have a special significance.

But the situation took an unexpected turn on 19 June. Ben Bella was overthrown on 19 June and Boumedinne's government was established. This was the time when the Prime Ministers and the Heads of Governments of Commonwealth countries were in London for their meeting. As a reaction to this development, Prime Minister Shastri called a meeting of the Prime Ministers and Heads of the States of Commonwealth countries to consider the question of the Second Afro-Asian Conference. After a meeting of just half an hour, they sent a cable requesting the Algerian government to postpone the conference.²⁶ The cable also appealed the Algerian government to spare Ben Bella's life on humanitarian grounds.²⁷

Chou En-lai was in Cairo when the news of the cable became public. The cable of course became the subject of discussion in his parleys with Nasser and at the end of their fourth round of parleys both the leaders agreed that "circumstances did not warrant a postponement of the conference."²⁸ Algerian government also wanted to hold the conference as scheduled and it went ahead with the preparations. On the night of 22 June, in his banquet speech in Cairo, Chou En-lai

26 Africa Diary, vol. 5, no. 31, 24-30 July 1965, p. 2438.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid., p. 2439.

declared China's "complete and wholehearted support" to the new government of Algeria. He said that the coup d'etat in Algeria was "entirely the internal affair of Algeria", fully supported the Algerian government's decision to stick to the schedule and expressed a hope that the Afro-Asian Conference would not only be held as scheduled but would also be made a success.²⁹

In London, after the deliberations between President Ayub Khan and the Chinese Charge d'Affairs, the second meeting of the Afro-Asian Commonwealth Prime Ministers and Heads of States was called by Ayub Khan on 23 June.³⁰ But shortly after the discussion began it was found that especially the African Statesmen were not prepared the reverse the decision of 21 June meeting.³¹ The "intensive diplomatic activity in London by the Chinese on the one hand"³² and special Algerian envoy on the other, thus failed.

In Algiers, an emergency meeting of the Preparatory Committee was called on 24 June. The Guinean delegate boycotted the meeting as his government had not recognized Boumedinne's government. In this meeting Algeria proposed that the Foreign Ministers should meet on 25 June and China

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., p. 2438.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

promptly supported the proposal but the Preparatory Committee overruled them. Nevertheless, Algerian government declared that the Foreign Ministers would meet on 26 June.

Demonstrations supporting Ben Bella were organized by his supporters and pro-Ben Bella posters also continued to appear during this period. On the night of 25 June a bomb exploded in a building on the periphery of the conference venue killing five and injuring seven persons. The explosion of bomb did more to persuade Algeria to postpone the conference than anything else. The delegates of the countries (excluding those of the Afro-Asian Commonwealth countries) had assembled on 26 June in the conference hall but this meeting was suddenly substituted by the Preparatory Committee meeting. The postponement resolution moved by the Ethiopian delegate was approved by the Preparatory Committee meeting unanimously.³³ In this meeting it was agreed that the conference be held on 5 November and the Foreign Ministers should meet from 28 October. Chinese delegate maintained an attitude of sulkiness throughout the meeting in contrast to earlier exuberance of the Chinese authorities.³⁴

The postponement was followed by a series of talks in Cairo on 27 June between Nasser, Chou En-lai and Sukarno. On 28 June they met again and Ayub Khan joined them. In the

33 Ibid., p. 2436.

34 Ibid.

meetings on 29 and 30 June Pakistan was represented by Bhutto. In the meetings on 29 and 30 June these statesmen approved the Preparatory Committee's decision to postpone the conference. Their joint statement released after 30 June meeting said, that they were agreed that the postponement of the conference was "not a backward step for Afro-Asian Solidarity." Emphasizing their determination to hold the conference on 5 November, they called upon the Afro-Asian governments to give their full support to "ensure the maximum success of the Second Afro-Asian Conference."³⁵

II

China's enthusiastic support to the Second Afro-Asian Conference continued between June and September 1965.³⁶ Chen Yi, in his press conference on 29 September in Peking which was attended by Western journalists, spoke about the conference in a rather frank manner. He said that the Second Afro-Asian

35 Ibid.

36 See: 1) China-Algeria Joint Communique of 28 August in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 36, 3 September 1965, p. 7.

2) Chen Yi's Press Conference in Karachi on 4 September. Report in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 37, 10 September 1965, p. 5.

3) Chou En-lai's interview on 8 September to a correspondent of Middle East New Agency. Report in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 38, 17 September 1965, pp. 8-9.

Conference

should support the people of Vietnam, Laos, the Congo (Leopoldville), the Dominican Republic, Angola, Mozambique, Portuguese Guinea, South Africa, the Arab People of Palestine, and the Peoples of South Yemen, Malaya, Singapore and North Kalimantan in their struggle against imperialism. 37

China was extremely keen about the condemnation of US over the escalation of Vietnam war. Chen Yi, therefore, even "anticipated" that the "first item on the agenda after the opening session will be the condemnation of U.S. imperialism." Only if this was done "the Bandung Spirit will be raised to a new level." And if the conference failed to "make an open denunciation of U.S. imperialism but only opposed imperialism in general terms", Chen Yi said, then the Second Afro-Asian Conference "will not have much significance."³⁸

Chen Yi informed the journalists that a "cabinet minister of a certain country" had told him that some Afro-Asian countries could not openly denounce US at the conference because they needed US aid for "solving the bread question." There were some countries which held that "the first and foremost task" of the conference was to denounce imperialism, "otherwise" there would be "no sense in convening the conference."³⁹ These two sides were in conflict and China sided

37 Report in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 41, 8 October 1965, p. 10.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

with the latter. As far as the "bread question" was concerned, Chen Yi opined that it was best to rely on one's own efforts. He also pointed out a possibility that "more they (Afro-Asian countries) denounce imperialism, the more bread probably will they get from it, otherwise they will not get any." Because such was the "character of U.S. imperialism...." He also opined that it was "advisable to adopt a resolution...declaring the cancellation of all debts which Afro-Asian countries owe to the United States...."⁴⁰

Chen Yi opposed the possible participation of the General Secretary of U Thant in the Second Afro-Asian Conference. To invite a representative of the UN would mean, "in effect, to bring the United States into the conference" which would be "tantamount to discarding the Bandung Spirit."⁴¹ He also revealed that the President of Algeria "sympathized" with China's stand on this question and had promised to "find a solution" to the problem created by invitation to U Thant by Ben Bella before his fall.⁴² An important question China would like to be discussed in the conference was, "how the Afro-Asian countries are to free themselves from imperialist control and develop their national economy (sic) independently."⁴³ The

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., p. 11.

Second Afro-Asian Conference would have "more far-reaching significance" than the first, "if" it adopted "a resolution for the building of independent national economies", through self-reliance and Afro-Asian economic cooperation."⁴⁴

Chen Yi was thus making concrete proposals about the Second Afro-Asian Conference and attached it utmost importance till 29 September 1965. On 15 October however, China formally requested the Preparatory Committee to postpone the conference.⁴⁵ The Chinese request touched off a heated argument in the meeting of the Preparatory Committee. Even after the eight hour discussion spread over two meetings on 15 and 16 October, the Preparatory Committee could not arrive at any decision. On 19 October, China circulated a draft resolution among the members of the Committee calling for the postponement of the conference. The Preparatory Committee again met on 20 and 21 October where appeals were made to China to change its position but it did not. On 21 October, a resolution was introduced by India authorizing Algeria to go ahead with the preparations and hold the conference as scheduled. The resolution was adopted by majority of the members of the Committee. It was released to the press next day and as a result, China openly criticized Algeria. According to China, the resolution was invalid because

44 Ibid.

45 Africa Diary, vol. 5, no. 48, 20-26 November 1965, p. 2611.

all decisions had to be unanimous.⁴⁶

Finally Morocco, Ghana, Indonesia, Iran and the UAR moved a resolution asking for the adjournment of the meeting and to ascertain the views of the member countries. The Foreign Ministers' meeting was postponed for two days. Algerian government decided to refer the matter to the Foreign Ministers meeting which was again criticized by China.

The Foreign Ministers' meeting opened on 30 October, which China boycotted. The opening ceremony ended with the election of the Algerian Justice Minister as the Secretary-General of the conference and the meeting then went into a closed session. Cambodia, Pakistan, North Vietnam and North Korea also boycotted this meeting. The Foreign Ministers' meeting on 31 October was preceded by deliberations among nine Afro-Asian countries including Ceylon and the UAR who informally conferred to formulate the postponement resolution.⁴⁷ Indonesia also joined those seeking the postponement, saying that if the conference was held, Sukarno "would not be able to attend it in view of the troubled situation in Indonesia."⁴⁸

Algeria seemed to be in two minds on going ahead to hold the conference when China declared that it would not participate in it. Algeria indicated on 28 October that it was not

46 Ibid., pp. 2611-12.

47 Ibid., p. 2611.

48 Ibid.

unalterably opposed to the postponement. The Algerian government did not issue any statement to that effect but used two government controlled press organs to indicate its position. On 28 October, both Algeria Press Service (APS) and El Moudjahid, the FLN organ, raised the question whether the conference should open as scheduled and opined that the Foreign Ministers should take the decision. But at the same time both of the organs made much of the argument that without China the conference would lose much of its significance.⁴⁹ Before the Foreign Ministers met on 30 October, a high ranking Algerian Foreign Ministry official said that the Chinese boycott was "a new element, the importance of which could not be overlooked."⁵⁰ It was no surprise, therefore, that when the Foreign Ministers met on the night of 1 November, with Algeria willing to postpone the conference, the Foreign Ministers agreed to postpone the conference again. In the early morning of 2 November the decision was made public.

III

If the postponement of the conference in June was a diplomatic defeat for China, the postponement in November was certainly a diplomatic success. But the important question is, why did China propose the postponement and boycotted even the Foreign Ministers meeting? In his letter to Afro-Asian countries on 22 October, Chou En-lai said:

49 Ibid., p. 2613.

50 Ibid.

Unfortunately, since the end of June the situation has grown more and more complicated...new tensions and conflicts have occurred between certain Afro-Asian countries during this period, and even now there exist among Afro-Asian countries differences, which cannot be solved for the time being, over a series of questions of key importance to the success of the Second African-Asian Conference, e.g. whether a non-Afro-Asian country is entitled to participate in the African-Asian Conference, whether the Second African-Asian Conference should have anything to do with the United Nations and whether it is necessary for the conference to condemn the imperialists, colonialists and neocolonialists...and particularly to condemn the U.S. imperialist aggression in Vietnam. All this cannot but cast a shadow over the Second African-Asian Conference. It can be said that the present circumstances are more unfavourable to the holding of the conference than those which prevailed in June.... 51

The arguments given by Chou En-lai for advocating the postponement are not very convincing. The letter said that the situation as developed from June 1965 was unfavourable for Afro-Asian Solidarity. This argument is not convincing because, if China had really felt that the situation had become unfavourable to Afro-Asian Solidarity right from June, Chen Yi would not have spoken so frankly about the tasks of the conference in his press conference of 29 September. Chou En-lai in his letter gave as a second reason for postponement - "new tensions and conflict between certain Afro-Asian countries." This was probably a reference to September 1965 war between India and Pakistan. But the concern for the Indo-Pak war could not have

51 Text of the letter in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 44, 29 October 1965.

been the reason for China's advocating postponement of the conference. Firstly, because India itself would have liked to keep this issue out of the conference as it kept the question of Sino-Indian dispute out of the Djakarta meeting. Secondly, according to the one method of making the conference a success - and nobody had opposed this method - China had argued that the disputes between Afro-Asian countries should be kept out of the conference. Using this method, China could have kept the issue of Indo-Pakistan war out of the conference. Thirdly, if China felt in 1963-64, that the Afro-Asian Solidarity could be strengthened in the Second Afro-Asian Conference in spite of 1962 Sino-Indian war, there was no reason why it could not have been done after the Indo-Pak war.

It is certain that China's decision to request the postponement was taken sometime after 4 October. Because, joint statement of the delegation of the Indonesian People's Assembly and the Standing Committee of the People's Congress of China, as late as on 4 October said that the conference must be held and made a success.⁵² And if the decision was taken after 4 October, the real reason for requesting postponement must be found in the developments which immediately preceded 4 October. One such development was the Untung Coup of 30 September and the counter coup successfully staged by Indonesian army in the

52 The Joint Statement of 4 October in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 42, 15 October 1965, p. 3.

53

first week of October.

Peking Review itself gives an impression that the Indonesian developments in October forced China to change its stand regarding the Second Afro-Asian Conference. On 22 October Peking Review published information of Indonesian developments under four headings. ⁵⁴ Peking Review reveals that from 1 to 15 October New China News Agency (NCNA) could not get any report from its correspondent in Djakarta owing to the control of radio and telecommunications by the Indonesian army. The first round up report on Indonesian affairs published by NCNA on 19 October, therefore, was based on the information obtained from non-Chinese press reports and the broadcasts on Indonesian radio. The NCNA report dwelt in detail on the military

53 Untung Coup was staged by Lt. Col. Untung who was the battalion Commander of Sukarno's bodyguard. He had killed, on 30 September, six top army generals allegedly to save Sukarno from their conspiracy to overthrow Sukarno. Indonesian army led by Suharto staged a counter-coup and killed hundreds of thousands of communists and the people identified as such. The countercoup and the massacres that followed were described by the Time magazine as "West's best news for years in Asia." For details see W.F. Wertheim, "Indonesia Before and After the Untung Coup", Pacific Affairs (Richmond), Spring-Summer 1966, pp. 115-27.

- 54 They were: 1) China Lodges Strong Protest with Indonesian Government.
- 2) Hsinhua Statement Concerning Indonesian Army Papers Anti-China Fabrication.
- 3) Sudden, Drastic Changes in Indonesian Political Situation.
- 4) Renmin Ribao Publishes Materials on Current Political Situation in Indonesia.

control of Indonesian cities, burning of the Indonesian Communist Party headquarters and the ban on the Communist Party,⁵⁵ the killing of the communists, leftists and the centrists. The NCNA took a special note of the fact that Pranoto Raksosamudro, who was appointed Chief Commander of the Indonesian army on 1 October "by Sukarno himself", was relieved of his post on 14 October, that is, within thirteen days. It also noted that Suharto who replaced Raksosamudro as the Chief Commander of Indonesian army, in his very first order called on his subordinates to "continue to liquidate the remnants" of the Untung Coup.⁵⁶ Many anti-China demonstrations were staged in Djakarta and this was being done, noted the Peking Review, despite Sukarno's desire that a "calm atmosphere" was necessary.⁵⁷ Chinese analysts must have concluded from this, that it was anti-China, anti-communist Indonesian army led by Suharto that had become the real master of Indonesia in October 1965.

Indonesian developments had important implications for China's position in the Second Afro-Asian Conference. It is true that there was never a complete identity of views between Sukarno and the Chinese leaders. But in 1965 after Indonesia's

55 Text of the report in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 43, 22 October 1965, pp. 7-12.

56 Ibid., p. 11.

57 Ibid., p. 10.

withdrawal from the UN in January, Indonesia was completely isolated in international politics and as a result Indonesia would have depended more on China and supported China in the conference on all important issues. After all China was the only country which continued to support Indonesia on the Malaysian question and the only country which described the Indonesian decision to quit UN as a "just" decision.⁵⁸ Indonesia under Sukarno would have helped China to oppose U Thant's participation in the conference. Indonesia would have also sided with China on the question of disarmament because Indonesia itself had expressed a desire (after the second non-aligned conference)⁵⁹ to manufacture atom bombs.

The situation created by the Indonesian army counter-coup meant uncertainty about the Indonesian support to China on important issues in the Second Afro-Asian Conference. It also meant that China would have been left alone to oppose the Malaysian and also Singapore's participation because no Afro-Asian country was opposed to their participation.⁶⁰ Again, contrary to what the Soviet leaders had said after the Djakarta

58 Chinese Government Statement of 10 January 1965 in Peking Review, vol. 8, no. 3, 15 January 1965, p. 6.

59 G.H. Jansen, Afro-Asian and Non-Alignment (London, 1966), p. 390.

60 Singapore was separated ^{from} Malaysia in August 1965 but both China and Indonesia had continued to regard Malaysia and Singapore as imperialist creature in 1965.

meeting in 1964 about their participation in the conference, they continued to carry on a "quiet diplomacy"⁶¹ to muster Afro-Asian support for Soviet Union's participation in the Conference. India had also continued to support the Soviet participation.⁶² On this question again, Sukarno could have been expected to help China because of his increased dependence on Chinese support in international politics. Indonesian army's assumption of power meant loss of Indonesian support to China on this question too. In short, going to the conference in spite of the Indonesian countercoup meant running a risk of diplomatic defeat and isolation in the conference. To avoid this, the Chinese seem to have decided to request postponement of the conference.

61 Africa Diary, vol. 5, no. 24, 5-11 June 1965, p. 2365.

62 In fact in the Foreign Ministers meeting on 30 October in Algiers Indian representative at the very outset raised the question of Soviet, Malaysian and Singapore's participation. See, "Sardar Swaran Singh's Statement in Lok Sabha", Foreign Affairs Record, vol. 11, no. 11, November 1965, p. 351.

CONCLUSION

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Four phases can be observed of the development of the concept of Afro-Asian solidarity against imperialism, in Chinese foreign policy thinking. In the first phase of development between 1949-53 the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian solidarity was essentially a Stalinist concept. During this period the national bourgeoisie governments of Afro-Asian countries had no place in the united front against imperialism envisaged by China. Socialist Camp headed by the Soviet Union, Peoples Democracies of Asia and the working class movements were the forces in this united front.

In the second phase between 1954-59 China abandoned the Stalinist concept and reverted back to the concept evolved by the Second Congress of the Comintern and the Baku Congress. During this period the national bourgeoisie governments of Afro-Asian countries came to be regarded as an important ally in the united front against imperialism. Socialist Camp and the national liberation wars in Asia and Africa were the first and second important forces in the front against imperialism during this period. Though the Sino-Soviet differences started in 1956, the concept of Afro-Asian solidarity had not become a subject of controversy during this phase.

The third phase of development started in 1960 and ended in July 1963 with the conclusion of the Partial Test Ban Treaty. In this phase, Chinese ideas on the questions of war and peace, disarmament and the preservation of national independence of the

Afro-Asian countries, were added to the concept of Afro-Asian solidarity as understood in the second phase. This phase was of special interest and significance because China gave answers to some questions which did not exist during Lenin's days.

The fourth phase begins with the conclusion of the Partial Test Ban Treaty. In Chinese eyes, the Soviet Union was no longer interested in opposing imperialism and was in fact on the way of becoming a partner of the United States in its efforts to preserve the status quo. Therefore, the aim of the united front in this phase became opposition to superpower domination and to imperialism in general.

With the changing meaning of the concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity, the Chinese attitude to non-alignment also underwent a change. During 1949-53 Chinese did not recognize non-alignment as an independent force in international politics. Those who did not lean on the side of socialist camp were regarded as being on the side of imperialist camp. This attitude was given up immediately after the death of Stalin. During 1954-59 the non-alignment was regarded as an ally in the struggle against imperialism.

After 1959, a number of non-aligned countries started attaching utmost importance to disarmament and they appealed to the superpowers to take steps towards disarmament. In their view, anti-imperialist struggle was of secondary importance. But China attached utmost importance to anti-imperialist

struggles. It also demanded the participation of all countries in disarmament negotiations. The aim of disarmament negotiations had to be thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and not just banning certain types of tests. The disarmament negotiations which did not have this aim had to be opposed. However, it became quite evident in early sixties, that non-alignment was becoming more and more popular among Afro-Asian countries. Quite understandably, Chinese felt the need to popularize the concept of Afro-Asian Solidarity before the second non-aligned conference could further popularize the views which were not to China's liking.

During their visits to Afro-Asian countries in 1963-64, Chou En-lai and Chen Yi tried their best to muster support for the Second Afro-Asian Conference at an early date. Their efforts did not prove very successful. It must be noted however, that in spite of the differences between Afro-Asian Solidarity and non-alignment, Chinese have never criticized non-alignment as a whole nor has China's policy been anti-non-alignment.

In the first Afro-Asian Conference Chou En-lai had aimed at defusing the anti-China atmosphere that prevailed in 1950's in Asian politics. He tried hard to allay the fears of neighbouring countries and to promote normalization of relations with them. Against the background of US efforts to get maximum number of partners in SEATO, Chou En-lai quite understandably paid more attention in the Conference to South East Asian

countries, than to other Asian and African countries. Chou En-lai's efforts in the conference were to appear as moderate as possible. Therefore he stressed the common colonial experience of Afro-Asian countries more, than the need to struggle against imperialism. In an effort to appear moderate, he even compromised China's position on the question of US aid to Afro-Asian countries.

China's attitude towards the proposed Second Afro-Asian Conference was in a sharp contrast to its attitude to the First Afro-Asian Conference. Unlike at the time of the first conference, China took initiative in mustering support for the second conference. Again, unlike as at the time of first conference, China made concrete proposals about the tasks of the Second Afro-Asian Conference. Not only that China had no desire to compromise its position on the issue of US economic aid to Afro-Asian countries but it put forward a proposal which was unacceptable to most of the Afro-Asian countries and even insisted that the conference should endorse it.

In the First Afro-Asian Conference China was satisfied with the condemnation of colonialism in general. China realized in the post-Bandung period that when most of the Afro-Asian leaders condemn colonialism and imperialism they hardly mean the imperialism headed by United States. Therefore China demanded that the Second Afro-Asian Conference must condemn 'United States imperialism'. Chinese argument was that, only by specifying the leader of imperialism would Afro-Asian Conference

distinguish itself from the non-aligned conference. China also supported the claims of the Pathet Lao and the NLF to represent Laotian and South Vietnamese people in the Second Afro-Asian Conference.

From 1959 to 1965 China was being increasingly isolated in international politics. The Chinese must have been quite aware that the positions they took on the questions to be discussed in the Second Afro-Asian Conference were bound to isolate China further, but nevertheless they stuck to those positions. Their defiant attitude must have been partly a result of 1964 nuclear tests as well as their sound economic position in 1965.

China's view of the world revolution in which the third world countries occupy a prominent position, combined with the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian solidarity has some important implications for China and other nations. It would be logical to conclude that as long as the Afro-Asian countries try to change the present balance of power in favour of the third world, China will continue to have warm relations with those governments, whatever be their class-character. In the case of the countries where anti-imperialist struggle is led by communists (as in Vietnam and Laos) and where the balance of forces is already in favour of the communists, China will not recognize the governments headed by non-communists. Since the Chinese concept of Afro-Asian solidarity advocates peaceful-coexistence with non-socialist states as well as the need to

struggle against imperialism and the superpower domination, moderate material and political support to such struggles cannot be ruled out. Practising peaceful coexistence with capitalism and helping anti-imperialist movement simultaneously will no doubt be difficult and it remains to be seen how long China does it.

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